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kanda

# Sevington Inland Border Facility

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## Statement of Community Involvement

June 2025

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# 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report details the process and response to the pre-application engagement carried out by the Applicant (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Department for Transport (DfT), and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)). The primary purpose of this engagement was to inform and consult the local community regarding the proposed full planning application for the Sevington Internal Border Facility (IBF), which plays a critical role in national security, biosecurity, and UK border control.
- 1.2. A comprehensive engagement strategy was developed, utilising both physical and digital channels to engage with a broad range of stakeholders. This included:
  - Website – a dedicated website for the consultation
  - Direct communication with stakeholders
  - Direct communication with near neighbours to the site
  - Press releases to the local media and press
  - Consultation events (see [Table 1](#))
- 1.3. The aim of the engagement strategy was to seek the views of stakeholders in the pre-application stage and inform the detail of the final full planning application.
- 1.4. The feedback received during the engagement was constructive, with most residents acknowledging the importance of Sevington IBF for national and local security. The feedback received to date on the proposed planning application can be organised within the following themes:
  - Lighting
  - Noise
  - Traffic Management
  - Litter Control – outside the IBF boundary
  - Landscaping and Ecology
- 1.5. The Applicant has reviewed the feedback received and is considering a number of operational changes that could be implemented in the short-term. In addition to this the Applicant will continue to consider if there could be improvements that can be made at the site through the full planning application, and in the future.
- 1.6. HMG is committed to ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders and the community throughout the planning application process, and throughout the operation of the Sevington IBF.

## 2. Introduction and Purpose

### Introduction

- 2.1. This Statement of Community Involvement provides a record of community engagement undertaken during the pre-application phase of the full planning application for the Sevington IBF.
- 2.2. Sevington IBF was granted temporary planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020.
- 2.3. The temporary planning permission is due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. Given the continued operation of the site remains crucial for UK security and biosecurity, the Applicant is seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF and Border Control Post (BCP) operations.
- 2.4. The description of development is as follows:

*“Retention of the existing buildings, Goods Vehicle parking spaces, entry lanes, refrigerated semi-trailers, staff car parking spaces, access, site infrastructure, utilities, hardstanding, landscaping and ancillary facilities and associated works; and ongoing use of the site for an Inland Border Facility and Border Control Post, operating 24 hours per day, seven days per week.”*

### Purpose

- 2.5. The objectives of the engagement programme were:
  - To inform local residents, businesses, and local political representatives, of the intention to submit a full planning application for Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF), including the scope and anticipated timeline of the application.
  - To engage with a broad range of stakeholders - local residents, business owners, and community groups - to understand their current experiences with the operational activities at Sevington IBF.
  - To ensure that the engagement programme was open, inclusive, and accessible, using a variety of methods.
  - To identify key concerns and opportunities for improvement in the current operations of Sevington IBF and address these, where feasible, before the submission of a full planning application to Ashford Borough Council.
  - To foster constructive dialogue with the local community and political representatives, building relationships to support ongoing engagement throughout the planning process and beyond.
- 2.6. The engagement programme was developed to ensure meaningful and effective dialogue with the local community and stakeholders, in line with Ashford Borough Council's own Statement of Community Involvement (2023) guidelines:

*“55. On significant applications, the council encourages potential major developers to undertake pre-application consultation with the local community.*



*This process can serve to inform interested parties about the nature and scale of the proposal and give local people an opportunity to comment before proposals reach an advanced stage.*

*57. This might involve setting up design workshops with parish councils and local communities to help shape more detailed proposals before planning applications are submitted, accepting the co-operation of the developer will also be required."*

2.7. Engagement was also undertaken in line with guidance from the Government's National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF), which places a strong emphasis on community engagement within the planning system:

*"40. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.*

*41. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications."*

2.8. Further details of activities undertaken throughout the engagement programme are outlined in the following sections of this report.

# 3. Community Engagement Process

- 3.1. The following section sets out the process for the community engagement across two stages, ahead of submitting a full planning application.
- 3.2. In October 2024, the first stage of community engagement was held. This provided an opportunity to introduce the project team, and to inform all political and community audiences of the Applicant's intention to submit a full planning application for Sevington IBF.
- 3.3. The purpose of the first stage of engagement was to 1) outline current operational and physical arrangements at the IBF, 2) obtain feedback on local experiences of these, and 3) identify key concerns, allowing the team to review potential improvements that could be made for the site's full planning application.
- 3.4. In January 2025, a second stage of community engagement was undertaken to share an update on the progress of the full planning application for Sevington IBF. This included a presentation of the feedback received on the site's operations to date, and how this had helped to inform the scope of the technical surveys and potential operational changes.
- 3.5. The purpose of the second stage of engagement was to 1) provide the community with an update on the full planning application, and 2) present potential operational changes that could be implemented based on the feedback presented during the first stage of engagement.
- 3.6. Outlined below are details of activities undertaken to promote widespread awareness of the project and engagement opportunities, and an overview of the levels of involvement across the two stages in October 2024 and January 2025.

Stage One Community Engagement	
Date	Details
August 2024	Emails were sent to <b>26</b> politicians and officers at borough, county, parish, and parliamentary levels, as well as local business and community organisations, inviting them to meet the project team to discuss the site ( <a href="#">Appendix I</a> ).
October 2024	An online meeting was held between members of the project team and a local ward councillor for Ashford Borough Council.
October 2024	<b>2,442</b> flyers were delivered to residents, businesses and neighbours close to the site ( <a href="#">Appendix II</a> ).
October 2024	<b>55</b> letters were delivered to near neighbours, informing them of upcoming door knocking activities by Kanda Consulting ( <a href="#">Appendix III</a> ).
October 2024	A dedicated engagement website, <a href="http://www.engagesevingtonibf.co.uk">www.engagesevingtonibf.co.uk</a> , was launched ( <a href="#">Appendix IV</a> ).

	The website was visited by <b>708</b> users across both stages of the engagement programme.
October 2024	Kanda team members carried out 'door-knocking' of neighbours immediately surrounding the site. <b>45</b> addresses were visited, and <b>23</b> conversations were held with residents.
October 2024	An online meeting was held between members of the project team and St Mary's Sevington Church.
October 2024	The project team hosted two community engagement events, providing attendees with the opportunity to speak directly with team members and share their current experiences of Sevington IBF. <b>73</b> people attended the events across the two days. At the events, exhibition boards ( <a href="#">Appendix V</a> ) were displayed and both physical and digital feedback forms were provided ( <a href="#">Appendix VI</a> and <a href="#">Appendix VII</a> ).
October 2024	An online meeting was held between members of the project team and a representative for Health and Wellbeing at Ashford Borough Council.
October 2024	Social media advertisements promoting the dedicated engagement website were launched, reaching <b>9,739</b> people and generating <b>40,332</b> impressions ( <a href="#">Appendix VIII</a> ).
November 2024	An online meeting was held between members of the project team and representatives of Sevington, Mersham, Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils.
<b>Stage Two Community Engagement</b>	
December 2024	Emails were sent to <b>26</b> politicians and officers at borough, county, parish, and parliamentary levels, as well as local business and community organisations, to provide an update on the progress of the planning application ( <a href="#">Appendix X</a> ).
December 2024	An e-newsletter was sent to <b>52</b> subscribers on the mailing list, providing an update on the progress of the planning application ( <a href="#">Appendix X</a> ).
January 2025	<b>2,442</b> flyers were delivered to nearby residents, businesses and neighbours to the site, using the same distribution area as with stage one engagement ( <a href="#">Appendix IX</a> ).
January 2025	Emails were sent to 26 politicians and officers at borough, county, parish, and parliamentary levels, as well as local business and community organisations, notifying them of the upcoming engagement activity ( <a href="#">Appendix X</a> ).
January 2025	Social media advertisements promoting the upcoming engagement activities were launched, reaching <b>9,619 people</b> and generating <b>51,916 impressions</b> ( <a href="#">Appendix XI</a> ).

January 2025	A meeting was held between members of the project team and a local Ashford Borough Council ward councillor and a Kent County Council ward councillor before the first exhibition event.
January 2025	Two community engagement events were held to present stage 1 feedback and discuss potential operational improvements. <b>35</b> people attended across the two events and provided their feedback. At the events, exhibition boards were displayed ( <a href="#">Appendix XII</a> ), and both physical and digital feedback forms were provided ( <a href="#">Appendix XIII</a> and <a href="#">Appendix XIV</a> ).

Table 1: Summary of engagement activities

## Project Website

- 3.7. The dedicated engagement website ([Appendix IV](#)), [www.engagesevingtonibf.co.uk](http://www.engagesevingtonibf.co.uk), was launched on **10<sup>th</sup> October 2024** and will remain the principal information and feedback hub throughout the project.
- 3.8. The website hosted a number of pages providing background information on the project team, existing operations at Sevington IBF, and the reasons behind the intention to submit a full planning application for the site. To keep visitors well informed, the website contained a timeline for the project and an archive section with links to the previous SDO decision notices. It also provided an online survey where readers could submit their feedback on the full planning application digitally.
- 3.9. The website is updated on a regular basis. Throughout the pre-application period, the website pages have been refreshed (text and images) with new information for readers to be kept up to date on the full planning application.
- 3.10. On 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 the project website was updated to include information about the Stage Two engagement, including details on the upcoming events. New presentation materials/ exhibition boards were uploaded ([Appendix XII](#)), and a survey was available for people to share their views ([Appendix XIII](#) and [Appendix XIV](#)).
- 3.11. The website contains a page for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which was updated throughout the engagement programme.
- 3.12. Visitors to the website were invited to sign up for the project mailing list, and updates were sent to the list via e-newsletter.
- 3.13. Printed flyers and letters were sent to local residents to advertise the website and engagement events ([Appendix II](#), [Appendix III](#), and [Appendix IX](#)). Local resident Facebook groups were also notified and targeted social media advertisements were distributed via Facebook and Instagram ([Appendix VIII](#) and [Appendix XI](#)).

- 3.14. Over the course of the pre-planning engagement period, **708** unique users visited the website (from 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025).
- 3.15. At the time of writing, **52** people have signed up for the mailing list.
- 3.16. The engagement website provided contact details for the engagement team, offering people the opportunity to request printed copies of the engagement materials for accessibility purposes.

### Ongoing communication channels

- 3.17. Throughout the engagement programme, Kanda Consulting supplied and managed a telephone number (020 3900 3676) and dedicated project email address (contact@engagesevingtonibf.co.uk) on behalf of the Applicant. The contact number and email address remain available for stakeholders to reach out to the engagement team at any time.
- 3.18. These contact measures allowed residents, political representatives and local organisations to speak to the team directly if they had any queries or comments.
- 3.19. The project team has received **10** emails and **one** telephone call to date ([Appendix XV](#)) and the engagement team has responded to all email enquiries and the telephone call. All feedback has been incorporated into this document's 'Feedback and Applicant's Response' section (Section 4).
- 3.20. The project email address and telephone number will continue to be managed on behalf of the Applicant, ensuring all stakeholders continue to have the opportunity to raise concerns or questions following the submission of a full planning application.

### Near-neighbour letter

- 3.21. In October 2024, ahead of initial engagement events and the distribution of a flyer advertising them, a near-neighbour letter ([Appendix III](#)) was sent to 55 properties surrounding the site. The distribution area for the letter can be seen below:





Figure 1: Neighbour letter distribution area of 55 addresses

3.22. The letter was distributed via Royal Mail to all addresses within the distribution area. The area covered included, but was not limited to, residents living at:

- Church Road
- Cheeseman's Green Lane
- Kingsford Street

3.23. The purpose of this letter was to inform local residents about upcoming engagement and the objectives of the engagement. It also notified them of upcoming 'door-knocking' activity, giving nearby neighbours an opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences with Sevington IBF's operations, directly to Kanda Consulting.

### Door-knocking

3.24. The engagement team conducted two door-knocking sessions on **16<sup>th</sup> October** and **17<sup>th</sup> October 2024**. Due to stormy weather on 16<sup>th</sup> October, Kanda postponed the session and resumed door-knocking on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

3.25. Over the course of two days, **45** homes were visited. Residents in **12** properties provided initial feedback on their experiences with Sevington IBF. Residents in **11** properties discussed the engagement events, and door-knocking cards were left in the letterboxes of **22** addresses.

3.26. Key themes of feedback included lighting, traffic management, biodiversity and the impact on St Mary's Church. More detail on the feedback received during the door-knocking activity is captured in Section 4 of this report.

### Flyer

3.27. Across both stages of engagement, a flyer was sent to local residents in **October 2024** ([Appendix II](#)) and **January 2025** ([Appendix IX](#)). The distribution area for the printed flyer can be seen below:

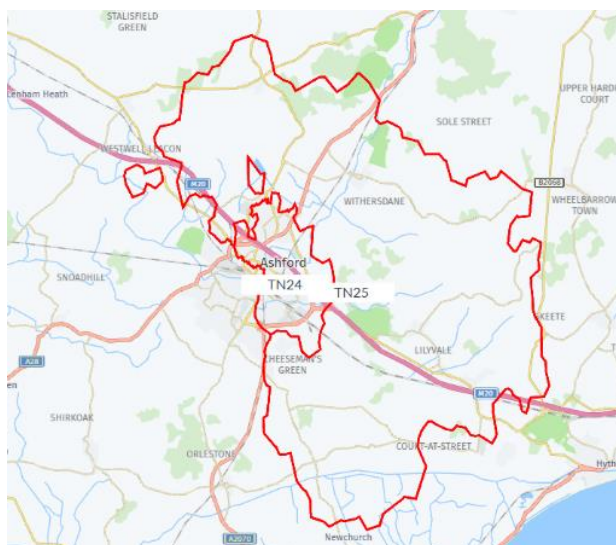


Figure 2: Flyer distribution area of 2,442 addresses

- 3.28. The flyer was sent to all addresses within the distribution area shown above. It included an invitation to the upcoming engagement events and provided details of the dedicated engagement website. Contact details for the project team were also included.
- 3.29. Residents with limited access to the internet were encouraged to call the project team for assistance so that offline information materials could be provided upon request.

## Social Media

- 3.30. Social media advertisements were employed to promote both stages of engagement. Targeted advertisements via Facebook and Instagram encouraged viewers to visit the website for further information, containing a direct link.
- 3.31. Geo-targeting for the paid social media advertisements was based on specific postcode areas. The local distribution area included the following postcode areas around the site: TN24 and TN25.



*Figure 3: Targeted postcodes as part of the social media campaign*

- 3.32. The first social media campaign ([Appendix VIII](#)) occurred between 29<sup>th</sup> October and 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024. These advertisements reached a total of **9,739 people**, generating 40,332 impressions and 336 clicks.
- 3.33. The second social media campaign occurred between 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025 ([Appendix XI](#)). These advertisements reached a total of **9,619 people**, generating **51,916** impressions and 388 clicks.

## Community engagement events

- 3.34. In total, **four** community engagement events were held across both stages of the engagement programme.

3.35. The first engagement event was held on **19<sup>th</sup> October 2024** at **Mersham Village Hall, TN25 6NU**.



*Image 1: Project team members and attendees at the 19<sup>th</sup> October event*

3.36. A total of **40** people attended this event including representatives from the following:

- Ashford Borough Council
- Sevington with Finberry Parish Council
- Mersham Parish Council

3.37. The second engagement event was held on **26<sup>th</sup> October 2024** at **St Mary the Virgin Church in Willesborough, TN24 0YR**.



*Image 2: Project team members and attendees at the 26<sup>th</sup> October event*

3.38. A total of **33 people** attended this event including representatives and political figures from the following:

- Ashford Borough Council



- Sevington and Willesborough Churches
- Ashford Green Party

3.39. Over the course of the first stage of the engagement programme, the project team received **12** responses to the survey from local residents. The team also collated verbal feedback received at events which has been captured in Section 4 of this report: 'Feedback and Applicant's Response'.

3.40. More details about the key themes raised across stage one community engagement are contained in Section 4 of this report: 'Feedback and Applicant's Response'.

3.41. The third engagement event was held on **17<sup>th</sup> January 2025**, at **Mersham Village Hall, TN25 6NU**.



*Image 3: Project team members and attendees at the 17<sup>th</sup> January event*

3.42. A total of **17 people** attended this event including representatives and political figures from the following:

- Ashford Borough Council
- Kent County Council
- Sevington Parish Council
- Mersham Parish Council

3.43. The fourth engagement event was held on **18 January 2025** at **Willesborough WI Hall, 100 Church Rd, Willesborough, Ashford TN24 0JG**.



*Image 4: Project team members and attendees at the 18<sup>th</sup> January event*

3.44. A total of **18 people** attended this event including representatives from the following:

.....

- Ashford Borough Council
- Ashford Green Party

3.45. During the second engagement stage, the team received **four** digital feedback forms and **five** hard copy feedback forms from residents who attended events. The team also collated verbal feedback received at events, which has been captured in chapter 4 of this report: 'Feedback and Applicant's Response'.

3.46. For more detail on the key themes of feedback received during all community engagement activities, please see Section 4: 'Feedback and Applicant's response'.

## Meetings with political representatives and local organisations

3.47. Throughout the engagement programme, Kanda Consulting approached local political representatives and organisations to discuss the Applicant's intention to submit a full planning application for the site. Kanda identified relevant parties through a comprehensive audit of the area.

3.48. The objective of initial engagement was to inform political representatives and local organisations as early as possible about the plans to submit a full planning application and identify key topics of interest before the wider community engagement events.

3.49. From this early engagement, the team also sought to establish relationships with those connected to the site, ensuring the plans for the full application could be clearly communicated and to foster ongoing dialogue throughout the engagement programme and beyond.

3.50. In August 2024, an email was sent to identified political representatives and business / community organisations, on behalf of the Applicant ([Appendix I](#)). The email outlined plans to seek full planning permission for the site and invited recipients to a detailed briefing with members of the project team. Further correspondence was sent to the same group in September and December 2024 and January 2025 ([Appendix X](#)) to promote awareness of engagement events, the website and with further invitations to meet.

3.51. Correspondence was sent to the following political representatives:

- Leader of Ashford Borough Council
- Deputy Leader of Ashford Borough Council
- Ashford Green Party
- Leader of Ashford Labour
- Leader of Ashford Conservatives
- Ashford Borough Council councillor for Mersham, Sevington South with Finberry
- Ashford Borough Council Cabinet Member for Port Health
- Ashford Borough Council Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing Delivery & Communication
- Ashford Borough Council Cabinet member for Communities, Health and Wellbeing

- Ashford Borough Council Cabinet member for Commercial Property and Investment
- Chief Executive of Ashford Borough Council
- Ashford Borough Council Head of Economic Development
- Ashford Borough Council Head of Policy and Performance
- Ashford Borough Council councillor for Highfield ward
- Ashford Borough Council councillor for Aylesford & East Stour ward
- Chair and Vice-chair of Sevington with Finberry Parish Council
- Chair of Mersham Parish Council
- Chair of Smeeth Parish Council
- Chair of Brabourne Parish Council
- Chair of South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council
- MP for Ashford
- Kent County Council Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

3.52. **St Mary's Church, Ashford International Truckstop, and Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce** were also contacted.

3.53. A list of the meetings that took place can be found below:

- Ashford Borough Council ward councillor for **Mersham, Sevington South with Finberry** (October 2024 and January 2025)
- **St Mary's Sevington Church** (October 2024)
- Ashford Borough Council **Corporate Director of Health and Wellbeing** (October 2024)
- **Sevington, Mersham, Brabourne and Smeeth Parish Councils** (November 2024)

3.54. Key themes of feedback that arose from these meetings can be found in the 'Feedback and Applicant's Response' section of this report.

# 4. Feedback and Applicant's Response

4.1. The table below highlights the key themes of feedback gathered from residents, political representatives, and local community groups at various forums and stages of the engagement programme, along with the team's responses to the issues raised.

4.2. This includes feedback from the following engagement channels:

- Door-knocking sessions – direct conversations with local residents.
- Political/ officer meetings – outside of formal pre-application meetings with Ashford Borough Council planning officers
- Community group discussions - with representatives of key local community organisations
- Community engagement event verbal feedback - informal feedback provided by attendees during the public events.
- Feedback forms - written responses from attendees and the wider community.
- Email and queries via the website - online submissions and direct email communications from residents and local community representatives.
- Telephone calls - verbal feedback provided by community members over the phone.

4.3. For detailed feedback received on the surveys and email enquiries, please see [Appendix XV](#).

## Transport and Access

Key theme of feedback	Feedback	Applicant's Response
<b>Traffic around Junction 10</b>	<p>While residents, local political representatives and community organisations acknowledged that traffic issues were not solely due to IBF operations, many raised concerns about congestion, queuing, confusion, and safety hazards around Junction 10a.</p> <p>Some residents suggested installing traffic lights at both A20 junctions leading to Junction 10a and at the roundabout to help improve traffic flow.</p> <p>One consultee noted that they felt that <i>"The experience of transport to date is that it has been acceptable."</i></p>	<p>Concerns about traffic around Junction 10a, including queuing, confusion, and safety, have been acknowledged.</p> <p>Recent traffic analysis indicates that the current network can accommodate forecast traffic flows under both normal and exceptional conditions.</p> <p>Traffic modelling indicates that M20 Junction 10a is the only junction where the operations of the Sevington IBF might have an impact, with increased queuing anticipated on both the A20 eastbound and westbound approaches in 2026 and 2036.</p> <p>However, the modelling also indicates that the junction is already expected to exceed its practical and actual capacity in both years, even without the Sevington IBF. Therefore, some form of intervention is likely to be needed regardless of any additional demand generated by the scheme.</p> <p>Initial discussions with National Highways and Kent County Council will explore potential measures to support the effective operation of the junction and address the cumulative impact of the Sevington IBF and baseline conditions.</p> <p>Additional traffic surveys and modelling are included in the Transport Assessment report. The Applicant will continue to engage with the local community and relevant authorities to ensure that any necessary improvements are evidence-based and appropriately implemented.</p>

<b>Re-routing and issues around signage</b>	<p>Several residents and political representatives highlighted concerns regarding traffic congestion caused by trucks using inappropriate and narrow local roads.</p> <p>It was suggested that, on occasion, a lack of clear signage/ navigation led lorry drivers inadvertently onto narrower, potentially more hazardous roads. However, respondents noted that issues around driver re-routing had decreased more recently.</p> <p>It was also noted that there were previous issues with the wrong post-code appearing in Satellite Navigation (SatNav) systems, which also contributed to lorry drivers taking the wrong routes.</p> <p>A number of those engaged suggested that clearer signage could help mitigate this issue, with some proposing that trucks be directed to use Junction 10a instead of Junction 10 to avoid similar problems in the future.</p> <p>Additionally, some residents emphasised the need for more noticeable, larger, and clearer signage to assist drivers.</p>	<p>Concerns about Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using narrower roads near residences have been noted.</p> <p>A new programme of highway signage was completed in late 2024 to provide clearer directions for drivers heading to the site. Previously, drivers were given incorrect location details, but route corrections were made with SatNav companies and updated information was distributed to hauliers in late 2021.</p> <p>Additional traffic surveys and modelling have been conducted to review HGV routes. These studies aim to identify improvements and ensure better management of HGV movements to reduce disruption to the local community. Findings will guide any necessary changes to routing and traffic management. More details are available in the Transport Assessment document.</p>
<b>HGV drivers on Church Road</b>	<p>In the second stage of community engagement, there was concern about the persistence of lorry drivers using Church Road, which has been causing significant disruption.</p> <p>A further issue was raised regarding the potential confusion among lorry drivers, who mistakenly associated "Sevington" with the IBF rather than St Mary's Church.</p>	<p>Concerns regarding lorry drivers using Church Road and the resulting disruption have been acknowledged. In response to previous resident feedback, an island was installed in late 2021 to prevent vehicles from entering Church Road.</p> <p>To further address these concerns, some signage has been updated to read 'St Mary's Church' instead of 'Sevington Church'. This change is intended to provide clearer direction for drivers with limited knowledge of the local area and the English language, helping to deter them from using narrower routes.</p>

	<p>To address this, consultees suggested that the signage be updated to clearly differentiate between the entrance to the IBF and the church, thereby preventing any further confusion.</p> <p>Additionally, it was suggested that “a width barrier to direct heavy vehicles around the other way” could be installed to further deter drivers from driving down Church Road.</p>	<p>The suggestion of a width barrier to prevent heavy vehicles from accessing Church Road has also been noted. While this would require further discussions with local highways authorities, the Applicant remains open to exploring feasible solutions that align with road safety regulations and the needs of the community.</p>
<b>Pedestrian routes</b>	<p>Several residents were pleased that sightlines to key local church spires and towers were maintained and noted recent bridleway improvements (<i>“Pleased site lines of Church Spires/towers is being maintained - St Mary's Willesborough, St Mary's Sevington, St John the Baptist, Mersham and Aldington church.”</i>).</p> <p>Some residents called for better pedestrian access, especially to Mersham via Cheeseman's Green Lane. One respondent suggested extending Blind Lane to The Street in Mersham, and rerouting the path by the SuDs pond.</p> <p>Additionally, a resident raised concerns about the Public Right of Way (PRoW) route along Church Road, where pedestrians can see into private properties.</p>	<p>The importance of pedestrian access around the site is fully recognised. While suggestions for re-routing paths around the site have been noted, security concerns and operational constraints mean that significant changes to the site's layout or footpaths are not feasible.</p> <p>However, there remains a strong commitment to enhancing pedestrian safety and accessibility around the site's perimeter. This includes exploring additional screening through planting where appropriate. For further details, please refer to the accompanying landscape plans and Landscape Environmental Management Plans (LEMPs).</p>

## Air Quality & Sustainability Considerations

Key theme of feedback	Feedback	Applicant's Response
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<b>Air quality</b>	<p>In general, residents reported <i>“no noticeable impact on air quality”</i> since Sevington IBF had begun operations. One consultee noted that although they were <i>“nervous”</i> regarding the IBF’s impact on the local environment, <i>“those fears have somewhat been diminished as the ongoing day to day operational impact is now clear for all to see”</i>.</p> <p>Where concerns were raised, those were primarily related to lorries idling, with engines still running, when stationary or parked (<i>“Stationary/parked lorries should not be permitted to run generators”</i>).</p>	<p>Comments about air quality have been noted, and it is positive to understand that residents have reported no noticeable impact since operations began. An air quality assessment has been completed and will be submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>Local residents can be assured that drivers are encouraged not to idle their engines at Sevington IBF, as per site regulations. Traffic marshals remind drivers to switch off their engines once idle, and this guidance is also communicated to drivers arriving at the site, in line with government recommendations. Drivers with temperature-controlled consignments and trailers are not able to turn the vehicles’ engine off.</p> <p>On-site traffic marshals will continue to encourage all users to switch off their engines to address concerns.</p>
<b>Solar Panels</b>	<p>Several residents also inquired about the possibility of installing solar panels on available space on the site to promote the generation of clean energy. One consultee noted that they felt strongly that the site <i>“should be powered by installation of solar panels on all roofs and available space”</i> in line with the Government’s ambitions to tackle climate change.</p>	<p>Some panels have already been installed on the roofs of two BCP sheds, with plans for additional panels on another shed. The long-term benefits are acknowledged, and the possibility of installing more panels in the future will be reviewed, subject to operational constraints.</p>

## Lighting

Key theme of feedback	Feedback	Applicant’s Response
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<b>Light spill into residential areas</b>	<p>Several residents and local political representatives expressed concerns about light pollution from the site, particularly its impact when combined with lighting from major roads.</p> <p>Several observations were made on the night-time lighting, which was said to have an adverse effect on those living close to the site, impacting their sleep quality.</p> <p>Observations were made that certain areas of the site can be less busy, suggesting that some lighting is unnecessary and could be reduced.</p> <p>There were suggestions that lights should be switched off when not operationally required, either manually or through the use of sensors.</p>	<p>Feedback around light spillage from the Sevington IBF has been noted and appreciated.</p> <p>We can confirm that site-wide lighting has undergone a series of modifications over time since the initial installation. In particular, lights in the north-west and south-east overspill areas, and lighting columns located in the central viewing corridor, have been turned off (except during exceptional times when operationally required). In addition, baffles were installed on lights closest to residential properties.</p> <p>To address concerns about nighttime lighting, some of the lights on the swim lanes are being turned off when not needed, potentially reducing their impact on the surrounding area. Lights across the site have already been reviewed in response to feedback; several have been turned off where possible.</p> <p>Exploration is underway to extend the existing fencing along the southern boundary to reduce light disturbance from HGVs to nearby homes.</p>
<b>Lighting fixtures</b>	<p>During Stage Two of the engagement programme, several residents and political representatives expressed support for the proposed lighting mitigation measures, which were introduced in response to feedback from the first stage of engagement.</p> <p>One respondent raised concerns about the fixed lighting on the southern elevation of the HMRC shed on site, which he noted was <i>“too bright and directed at Church Road residents.”</i></p>	<p>As mentioned above, further assessment of current light spill levels has been conducted, and measures have already been put in place to reduce any impact on residential areas, including installing shields on existing light fittings. This should inhibit any potential light spill into residential areas, including those living on Church Road.</p> <p>While adjustments to lighting fixtures have been made where feasible, the height of the lighting columns has been designed with operational requirements in mind, ensuring sufficient illumination for site operations, while minimising environmental impact.</p>

	Further queries were predominantly raised regarding the height of lighting columns and whether lower-level lighting could be installed.	More details are provided in the Lighting Impact Assessment, which is part of the planning application.
<b>Enhancing green screening</b>	Some residents questioned whether it was possible to enhance planting, particularly with trees and hedges, to help shield some of the light spill.	A review of the Landscape Environmental Management Plans (LEMPs) has been carried out. There is a commitment to fully implementing the LEMPs over the coming planting seasons, with small areas of additional planting proposed where feasible, considering operational needs, underground services, and land ownership. The LEMPs, including tree buffers, will help to mitigate lighting impacts.
<b>Lighting compliance</b>	A consultee requested clarification on whether the site's lighting is now compliant with relevant regulations and British Standards.	<p>The full planning application will be compliant with the relevant British lighting regulations, including the SLL (Society of Light and Lighting) Code for Lighting, BS 5489-1:2020, the Code of practice for road lighting in the UK, and EN 12464-2 (Lighting of Workplaces, Outdoors).</p> <p>All necessary steps have been taken to meet regulatory requirements, and ongoing monitoring will ensure continued compliance.</p>

## Noise and Vibration

Key theme of feedback	Feedback	Applicant's Response
<b>Low-frequency noise</b>	Several residents and political representatives raised concerns about noise pollution, particularly Low-Frequency Noise (LFN) caused by HGVs manoeuvring both outside and in the southern area of the Sevington site.	<p>It is noted that noise pollution, including Low-Frequency Noise (LFN) from HGVs, has been a concern for some residents, particularly at night and in areas close to the site.</p> <p>To minimise impacts on residents south of the site, a traffic rerouting scheme is being considered for off-peak hours. This</p>

	<p>One consultee specifically highlighted the impact of lorries at night, questioning why they could not be rerouted towards Junction 10a and directed west to London or east to the coast via the motorway, thereby avoiding residential areas.</p> <p>Additionally, it was suggested that refrigerated trailers should be positioned away from residential areas, with acoustic enclosures introduced to help mitigate noise impact.</p>	<p>scheme would redirect vehicles within the site to avoid more sensitive areas.</p> <p>Additionally, refrigerated vehicles requiring generators or cooling systems will continue to be positioned away from residential areas to help reduce noise disturbances.</p> <p>Noise levels on the site continue to be monitored, and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented in response to any identified issues.</p>
<b>Noise monitoring</b>	<p>Several residents sought clarification about the existing noise monitoring that was taking place on site. They questioned whether the LFN sound receptors were functioning effectively, particularly along the southern boundary.</p> <p>It was also noted that any monitoring equipment near Church Road would be positioned lower than the site itself, raising concerns about the accuracy of the noise readings from this location.</p>	<p>Noise levels within and outside the Sevington IBF site are monitored continuously and reported monthly to the Department of Environment Health at Ashford Borough Council.</p> <p>For the full planning application, the appointed noise consultants conducted supplementary baseline measurements comprising attended and unattended surveys at locations within and surrounding the site.</p> <p>For further details on the noise data that has been collected, please see the Noise Assessment document, which accompanies this planning application.</p>
<b>Acoustic fencing buffer</b>	<p>A few near neighbours of the site raised issues regarding noise pollution and questioned the acoustic fencing buffer.</p> <p>This included questions about the effectiveness of the acoustic buffers in blocking noise in their homes and when walking near the site, especially when traffic built up and at night, when noise appeared to be more noticeable.</p>	<p>The feedback received on the effectiveness of the acoustic buffer has been noted. As stated above: to address these concerns, a traffic rerouting scheme is being considered for off-peak hours to redirect vehicles away from sensitive areas and reduce intrusive noise.</p> <p>The performance of acoustic buffers is under continuous review, with immediate adjustments made as needed to improve noise mitigation. Noise levels will continue to be monitored, especially during peak periods, and additional measures will be implemented if required.</p>

	One consultee noted in particular, <i>"The route the HGV's take to exit places them on a slow bend between the large sheds and the acoustic fence. As they select a low gear and 'chug' around this bend, the vibrations caused by the frequency seem to reverberate off the sheds and fence."</i>	Our commitment to minimising noise impact on the local community is ongoing, and the Applicant will ensure effective solutions are in place through on-going noise-monitoring.
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## Landscape / Ecology

Key theme of feedback	Feedback	Applicant's Response
<b>Existing Landscape and Management Plans (LEMPs)</b>	<p>Many of those engaged felt that the Eastern parcel had not been maintained as agreed in the original temporary consent and that the original Landscape and Ecological Management Plans (LEMPs) had not been implemented successfully.</p> <p>Several expressed a desire to secure the long-term preservation of Sevington East, with a view to supporting Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for a minimum of 30 years.</p>	<p>Feedback on this topic is appreciated, and it is acknowledged that some planting outlined in previous LEMPs has not been successful. To address this, improved management and maintenance will be implemented for long-term protection and enhancement.</p> <p>The LEMPs approved under the temporary permission will be fully implemented in the upcoming planting seasons. Landscape architects have reviewed the existing LEMPs and planting specifications, recommending additional measures where necessary to significantly improve the landscaping.</p> <p>They also assessed site constraints such as the gas mains, heritage restrictions, security needs, and land ownership limitations (including National Highways land) to identify further planting opportunities.</p> <p>Further details on landscaping measures are included in the LEMPs accompanying this planning application.</p>

<p><b>Failed planting and suggestions for further landscaping</b></p>	<p>Several people asked about the condition of the existing planting on-site and sought clarification on the failed planting, particularly along the northern boundary under National Highways ownership.</p> <p>They also queried whether additional hedges and planting could be implemented where feasible.</p>	<p>The condition of existing planting on-site has been reviewed, including concerns regarding failed planting along the northern boundary. Where ownership falls under National Highways, the Applicant is actively engaged in direct discussions with the relevant authorities.</p> <p>It is noted that some planting on the site has been unsuccessful. As stated above, enhanced management and maintenance measures will be implemented to ensure long-term protection and improvement.</p> <p>Community suggestions regarding hedge reinstatement, pond enhancement, and screening improvements have been noted. As part of this, the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for Land East of Highfield Lane (Sevington East) includes a native hedge along this boundary to fill gaps and create a continuous hedge line.</p> <p>Further details of these measures are provided in the LEMPs that accompany this planning application.</p>
<p><b>Invasive species</b></p>	<p>Residents raised concerns about the urgent need for attention to the biodiversity land to the east of Highfield Lane, particularly in regard to the spread of invasive species like ragwort and thistles.</p> <p>It was noted that action must be taken before the nesting season to prevent contamination of adjacent agricultural grazing land and properties in the coming months.</p>	<p>We acknowledge concerns raised about the condition of biodiversity in the land to the east of Highfield Lane, particularly regarding the growth of invasive species.</p> <p>Following discussions with the Kent County Council (KCC) ecology team, the team's specialists have advised against spraying the field before September 2025. This is to avoid killing plant species that are beneficial to biodiversity and to protect local wildlife, keeping in mind the skylark nesting season which will run from April to August. The preference is to allow skylarks to nest and to let the field grow before reassessing in the autumn. Once the field is cut, the ecology team will develop a plan to handle any invasive species.</p>

		<p>The mowing of the field is proposed to take place in September 2025, with the ecology review to take place in October 2025. This will then access what is growing and develop an action plan for weed treatment.</p>
<b>Archaeological discoveries</b>	<p>The presence of the Cold War bunker at Sevington East was raised on several occasions, and local residents, including local councillors, queried the status of information boards.</p> <p>These information boards were to be erected as part of the commitments outlined in the LEMPs that were submitted as part of the original temporary planning permission.</p> <p>Those engaged sought clarification about whether they would still be implemented and if they would display details about the Cold War bunker.</p> <p>There were also suggestions to make the archaeological report publicly available, possibly through an engagement website, and to ensure these findings are easily accessible to the general public.</p>	<p>The Applicant is pleased to note the interest in the archaeological findings at the Sevington IBF site, particularly the Cold War bunker.</p> <p>Information boards will be installed around the site, including along the Sevington East bridleway, as part of the LEMP requirements to educate the public about the archaeological discoveries.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with Kent County Council (KCC) and Mott MacDonald regarding the archaeological findings report, and it has been confirmed that a more accessible version will be published online for the community to access and review.</p>
<b>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)</b>	<p>Those engaged noted that, in general, they felt that the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) around the site had worked well.</p> <p>However, several residents noted concerns on water drainage issues, particularly on Kingsford Street. Some suggested the re-excavation of ponds to collect water drainage.</p>	<p>The existing sustainable drainage systems on-site, including natural planting, ponds, swales, and other features for water management, have been acknowledged. Feedback indicating that these systems are generally functioning effectively is appreciated.</p> <p>The review of this feedback will continue, and a thorough assessment of SuDS performance, including drainage issues on Kingsford Street, will be conducted. The implementation of the Landscape and Environmental Management Plans (LEMPs) is</p>

		<p>expected to significantly enhance SuDS performance, leading to substantial improvements in water management and sustainability.</p> <p>Further details on SuDS and their performance can be found in the Environmental Statement accompanying this planning application.</p>
<b>Wildlife habitat provisions</b>	<p>Some residents expressed concerns about the measures in place to protect wildlife on Sevington East. One resident specifically sought clarification on whether barn owl boxes were proposed as part of the site's ecological provisions.</p> <p>They also questioned whether it would be appropriate to position these boxes near areas with incoming traffic, highlighting potential risks to the owls' safety and habitat suitability.</p>	<p>The protection and enhancement of local wildlife have been carefully considered in the full planning application. As outlined in the LEMPs, a range of measures are proposed to support biodiversity, including nesting boxes for bats, birds, and dormice.</p> <p>Specifically, three barn owl boxes are planned for the eastern side of Highfield Lane. Their placement has been carefully selected to provide safe and suitable access to foraging areas across the wider Sevington East site, helping to support and reinforce the local barn owl population.</p> <p>The positioning of these boxes has been designed to balance ecological needs with site operations, ensuring that wildlife can thrive without unnecessary risk. Further details on the proposed wildlife habitat provisions can be found within the LEMPs accompanying this planning application.</p>

## Other

Key theme of feedback	Feedback	Applicant's Response
<b>Community benefits and funding</b>	Although not related to this full planning application for Sevington IBF, several residents, as well as local political representatives, raised	Feedback raised around the community funding have been acknowledged; however, these primarily relate to the previous

	<p>funding for the church in relation to the previous SDO. It was noted that St Mary's Church was in urgent need of funding to repair the spire and update the Church, so this remains accessible for the community.</p> <p>Residents also questioned the possibility of working with the site's operator to unlock community benefits, including potential funds for the village and how they could support St Mary's Church as a 'Community Hub.'</p>	<p>Stour Park application rather than the current full planning application for Sevington IBF.</p> <p>A commitment remains to working collaboratively with the Church and the local community to explore funding opportunities in partnership with the community and Ashford Borough Council.</p> <p>Recognition is also given to the interest in engaging with the site operator to explore potential collaboration with the local community. Facilitation of discussions with relevant stakeholders is welcomed to consider how these initiatives might be taken forward.</p>
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<b>Litter around the northern boundary and outskirts of the site</b>	<p>Several residents living in close proximity to the site expressed concern about significant littering along the northern boundary of the site, particularly along the roadside leading to junction 10a and towards Orbital Park. Littering around the Sevington East bridleway was also raised.</p> <p>Multiple residents noted that there was an increase in littering incidents, including the inappropriate disposal of human waste (excrement and urine) thought to be done by lorry drivers.</p> <p>To address this issue, it was suggested that the site operator consider implementing measures such as increasing the number of on-site litter bins and improving driver welfare amenities.</p>	<p>Concerns raised regarding litter on the outskirts of the site, particularly around the northern boundary, have been noted.</p> <p>As the northern boundary lies outside the site, direct control is limited. However, driver amenities and waste bins are available on-site to discourage littering.</p> <p>The Applicant is actively engaging with the site operator, Kent County Council, and National Highways to review this issue and identify practical internal operational changes that may help address some of these concerns.</p> <p>In response to specific reports of littering on the Sevington East Bridleway, discussions with Kent County Council will continue to explore waste management solutions, including the potential installation and servicing of bins.</p>
<b>Socio-economic benefits</b>	<p>Overall, many of those engaged recognised the national strategic importance of Sevington IBF and its positive socio-economic impact. Residents and political representatives acknowledged that the Border Control Post (BCP) within the site plays a vital role in maintaining national biosecurity while also contributing to economic stability.</p> <p>Both residents and political representatives expressed their appreciation for the employment opportunities created for local residents.</p>	<p>Recognition from those engaged regarding the national strategic importance of Sevington IBF and its role in creating local employment opportunities is appreciated.</p> <p>The Applicant remains committed to supporting the local economy by working with the site operator to ensure that job opportunities continue to benefit local residents.</p>
<b>Operations and use of the IBF</b>	<p>Over the course of the engagement programme, some residents sought clarification about Sevington IBF's purpose. Several residents noted</p>	<p>The community's comments regarding Sevington IBF's purpose and the utilisation of different areas within the site has been noted.</p>

	<p>that the site often looked empty and queried its existing operational uses.</p> <p>At the most recent engagement events, questions were raised about ongoing inspections and the risk of the spread of diseases, particularly foot-and-mouth.</p> <p>Feedback further noted that residents found it very useful to discuss the nature of what was sent to Sevington for inspection and the process behind this.</p>	<p>Sevington IBF plays a critical role in ensuring national security, including biosecurity, at the UK border. It is recognised that the site may sometimes appear less busy, which could have contributed to the questions raised during the engagement programme. Due to the nature of the site and its essential operations, activities are often reactive and based on real-time intelligence.</p> <p>In response to concerns about inspections, particularly regarding foot-and-mouth disease risks, robust inspection protocols are in place to address these issues. These measures ensure safety and compliance with health regulations.</p> <p>We remain committed to transparency and keeping the community well-informed about the site's operations.</p>
<b>The name of 'Sevington IBF' site</b>	<p>A couple of residents queried why the site is called 'Sevington IBF,' noting that the name Sevington has historic meaning to locals, and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. They felt that this had now become associated with the IBF and wondered whether it was possible to change the name of the site.</p>	<p>The name 'Sevington IBF' was chosen to reflect the site's location. Comments about the association of Sevington Village with the facility have been noted, but there are no proposed changes to the site name given its five year establishment. Sevington IBF plays an essential role in border operations, and its designation aligns with other similar sites across the country.</p>

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1. This Statement of Community Involvement documents stakeholder and community engagement undertaken at the pre-application stage for the full planning application for the Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF).
- 5.2. The purpose of the engagement was to involve local residents, community organisations and political representatives in the planning process by seeking their feedback on current site operations. This feedback helped to inform the scope and priorities of the technical assessments, as well as potential operational changes, prior to the submission of the full planning application. Engagement was undertaken in accordance with the community engagement expectations set by Ashford Borough Council in its Statement of Community Involvement and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.3. The engagement programme began in August 2024 and continued through to January 2025, using a range of physical and digital methods to reach a broad and diverse audience. The project email and telephone number remain live for political and community stakeholders to be able to contact the engagement team at any time.
- 5.4. Key activities included engagement and meetings with key political representatives and community organisations, dedicated project website, door-knocking with immediate neighbours, and several public drop-in events.
- 5.5. Updates on the application's progress were provided at each stage of the engagement programme, with feedback helping to shape both the programme and the overall approach.
- 5.6. Key themes raised by respondents during pre-application engagement included:
- Noise impacts
  - Transport, access and signage
  - Lighting
  - Ecology and Landscaping
  - Littering around the site
- 5.7. Feedback from the engagement programme was generally constructive, with many members of the local community recognising the national and local importance of Sevington Inland Border Facility.
- 5.8. The Applicant has reviewed the feedback and proposed potential operational changes in response, particularly in regard to areas such as signage, lighting, and improvements to landscaping.
- 5.9. The "Feedback and Applicant's Response" section (section 4) of this document highlights the key themes of feedback received from the local community and explains how the Applicant has sought to respond to and address concerns.

5.10. The feedback received during the engagement programme has been taken into account and used to inform the preparation of the full planning application.

5.11. The Applicant is committed to continuing to engage with the community, neighbours and political representatives following the submission of the planning application. Channels of communication will remain open for further enquiries and discussion throughout the determination period.

# Appendices

## Appendix I – August 2024 Email to Political Representatives and Local Community Groups

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you on behalf of our clients, Department for Transport ('DfT'), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs ('Defra') and HM Revenues and Customs ('HMRC') in relation to Sevington Inland Border facility in the Parish of Sevington with Finberry, immediately adjoining the Parish of Mersham Parish.

We will shortly be entering into formal discussions with planning officers at Ashford Borough Council in relation to the future of this nationally significant infrastructure project, given the temporary consent, granted in 2020, is due to expire in December 2025. Given the scale and importance of the project, we have written to leaders of all the political parties within Ashford Borough Council. In due course, we intend to widen this out to the Chief Executive's office plus the MP, along with county, cabinet, ward and parish councillors, as well as carrying out full public and stakeholder consultation in the local area.

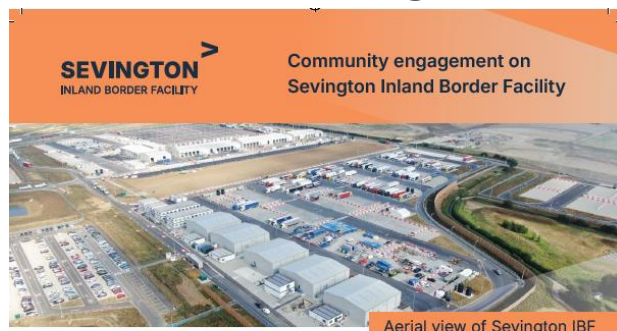
Please consider this email as an early notification that we will be in touch, over summer, to arrange September meetings/ other engagement activities with all our Council and community stakeholders, including yourselves, (as host and neighbouring Parishes) about this important project.

We look forward to meeting you.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

## Appendix II – Stage One: Flyer



Dear Neighbour,

Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF) is located in Ashford, Kent, close to the strategic M20 route which serves the key European access points at Dover and Folkestone.

The site is owned by the Department for Transport (DfT) and operated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Since the UK left the European Union, Sevington IBF has been essential in making sure that imported and exported goods meet requirements on taxes, customs, and biosecurity.

Sevington IBF received planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in December 2020 via a Special Development Order (SDO). The SDO granted temporary approval for Sevington IBF, valid until 31 December 2025, to enable prompt on-site operations.

With the temporary consent due to expire next year, the Government is seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF as it is currently crucial to ensuring national biosecurity at the UK border.

Please see overleaf for details on how to get involved. ➔

We understand the importance of engaging with our local community and, as we move into this next stage of local planning, are committed to having an open dialogue.

We will be undertaking a listening exercise to gain insights into local residents' experiences with Sevington IBF.

### Upcoming Community Engagement Events

We invite you to attend our upcoming engagement events, where you can learn more about the project, meet members of the project team, ask questions, and provide your feedback.

Details of the events are as follows:

📅 **Saturday 19th October, 10am – 2pm**

📍 **Mersham Village Hall, The Forstal, Ashford TN25 6NU**

📅 **Saturday 26th October, 10am – 2pm**

📍 **St Mary the Virgin Church, Willesborough, Ashford TN24 0YR**



If you are unable to attend these events, you can find information and share your thoughts on our consultation website at:

🌐 [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk)

### Get in touch

If you have any questions or would like to speak to a member of the team, you can contact us via:

📧 [contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](mailto:contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) ☎ **020 3900 3676**

✉ **FAO KAN0722, Floor 5, 10 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4UQ**

## Appendix III – Near Neighbour Letters



RE: Upcoming door-knocking activity and engagement events on Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF)

Dear neighbour,

I hope that you are keeping well. I am writing to you on behalf of my client, the Department for Transport ('DfT'), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs ('Defra') and HM Revenues and Customs ('HMRC') in relation to the Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF) in Mersham.

Since the UK left the European Union, Sevington IBF has been essential in ensuring that imported and exported goods meet taxes, customs, and biosecurity requirements. Sevington IBF received planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in December 2020 via a Special Development Order (SDO). This SDO granted temporary approval for Sevington IBF, to ensure essential on-site operations could commence quickly, and is valid until 31 December 2025.

With the temporary consent due to expire next year, the Government is seeking to retain the use of Sevington IBF, as the facility is currently crucial to ensuring national biosecurity at the UK border. We want to engage with the local community to discuss the site's operations and how any potential impacts of the facility could be mitigated in the future.

We will be undertaking a listening exercise to gain insights into local residents' experiences with Sevington IBF. A consultation flyer will shortly be arriving with local residents, outlining our objectives of this initial engagement exercise and the upcoming engagement events.

As a near neighbour to the site, we wanted to inform you that we will shortly be commencing door-knocking activity at this address. This will be an important opportunity to notify you of the upcoming consultation activity and to understand your current experience with Sevington IBF's operations, which will help us in our future planning. We will be door-knocking on:

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October, 4 – 7.30pm

We invite you to attend our upcoming engagement events, where you can learn more about the full planning permission, meet members of the project team, ask questions, and provide your feedback. Details of these events are as follows:

- Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October, 10am – 2pm, Mersham Village Hall, The Forstal, Ashford, TN25 6NU
- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October, 10am – 2pm, St Mary's the Virgin Church, Willesborough, Ashford, TN25 6NU

We look forward to welcoming you to the events. If you cannot attend, information will also be available on our dedicated project website at [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) and will be updated following these initial engagement events, along with the opportunity to provide your feedback online.

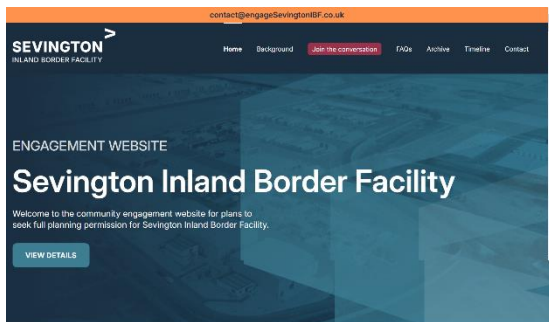
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the team at [contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](mailto:contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) or call us at 020 3900 3676.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Dancy  
Director, Kanda Consulting

# Appendix IV – Engagement Website



## Welcome

Many thanks for visiting our website. We've created this space to support community and stakeholder engagement on the future of Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF).

An IBF is a location where documentary and physical checks take place on goods entering and leaving the UK. For more background information on Sevington IBF, please visit the 'Background' tab.

In October 2024, representatives from HM Government held stakeholder meetings and two community engagement events covering the operations of Sevington IBF.

We would like to thank everyone who shared their experiences at the community events or online through the project website. Feedback received has helped inform the scope and priorities for technical surveys and other areas that will inform the full planning application. You can view the materials presented at the first stage of engagement here.

We are now hosting two additional engagement events as part of the second stage of the engagement process. We invite you to attend one of these events to receive an update from the project team and share your views. The feedback received, and the team's response to this, will be presented in the engagement materials. This will be available to view on the website and at the engagement events.

For more details, please see below or visit the 'Join the conversation' tab.



Aerial view of Sevington IBF

## Why are we engaging now?

Sevington IBF received planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) via a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020.

The SDO process granted temporary approval for Sevington IBF, enabling essential on-site operations could commence quickly in response to the UK's exit from the EU.

With the temporary consent due to expire in December 2025, the Government is seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF as it remains crucial to ensuring national security, including biosecurity, at the UK border.

We previously engaged with the local community and key stakeholders in October 2024 through a series of meetings, two community events and direct feedback through the project website. We are grateful for the feedback we have received so far and are committed to continuing engagement throughout this process.

## Engaging our communities

The Government and its planning team are committed to transparent and inclusive community engagement around the full planning application. We would welcome you to attend our engagement events below:

Event 1 – Friday, 17 January 2025 from 4pm–8pm

Mersham Village Hall

The Forstal

Mersham, TN25 8NU

Event 2 – Saturday, 17 January 2025 from 12pm–4pm

Willesborough Women's Institute Hall

100 Church Road

Willesborough, Ayrford TN24 0JG

More information on 'how, what, where and when' engagement will be carried out is provided in the 'Join the Conversation' page and in the exhibition boards, which can be viewed and downloaded there.

## Meet the team

Joint applicants Defra, HMRC and DfT have appointed a specialist team of consultants for Sevington IBF.



### Defra

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) is responsible for improving and protecting the environment, supporting the UK's food, farming and fishing industries. It is responsible for operating the Border Control Post (BCP) on site, and is the lead department progressing the full planning application.



### HMRC

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax and customs authority. It is the designated operator of the site, primarily overseeing the long-term management of Sevington IBF and carrying out customs checks both inbound and outbound.



### DfT

The Department for Transport (DfT) plans and invests in transport infrastructure to maintain and improve the UK transport network. DfT are the owners of the Sevington IBF site.



### JLL

JLL is a global real estate consulting company, offering comprehensive property services across the lifecycle of the development. JLL is the planning consultant for Sevington IBF.



### Waterman Group

Waterman Group is a leading engineering and environmental consultancy specialising in Net Zero sustainability, building services, structures, and transport and infrastructure. Waterman Group is undertaking the various environmental and technical reports in support of a future full planning application for Sevington IBF.



### bcal

bcal is a specialist firm of experienced landscape architects and urban designers.



### Kanda

Kanda is a consultancy specialising in working with community organisations, residents, and businesses to ensure they provide meaningful, early input into projects in the built environment.

## Background

[READ MORE](#)

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### Get in touch

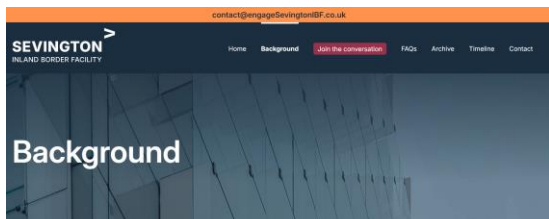
If you have any questions about the project, please get in touch.

[CONTACT US](#)



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[contact@engage.sevingtonibf.co.uk](mailto:contact@engage.sevingtonibf.co.uk)  
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## About Sevington Inland Border Facility

Sevington IBF acts as a location for checking inbound and outbound goods to and from the UK. It provides a designated location for the Border Control Post (BCP) and inspections.

Since the UK left the EU, Sevington IBF has been essential in allowing the government to conduct necessary inspections on imports and exports, ensuring that commercial consignments comply with tax, customs, and biosecurity regulations.

Sevington was chosen for its strategic location on the M20, providing direct access to the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

The site includes parking areas for HGVs and other vehicles. There are security measures and facilities to enable the checking of commercial consignments entering and exiting the sites. There are also office buildings, staff amenities, and basic driver facilities – including toilets and access to water.

Since opening in 2021, Sevington IBF has played a positive role in the local community. It supports up to 800 jobs and contributes over £2 million annually to the local economy, benefiting nearly 40 small and medium-sized businesses. Additionally, land at Sevington East has been designated for biodiversity conservation, achieving a substantial improvement in Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). It is proposed that the BNG at Sevington East will be secured for the longer term through a legal agreement for 30 years, protecting Sevington East from development during that time.



Aerial view of existing parking bays at Sevington IBF

## Planning

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has the power to grant a Special Development Order (SDO), which grants planning permission for development of land specified within the order. SDOs can be used for planning proposals of national significance, including an Inland Border Facility.

Sevington IBF received temporary planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (MHCLG) via a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020. The SDO granted approval for Sevington IBF to ensure essential on-site operations could commence quickly, with Sevington IBF beginning its first phase of operations in April 2021.

Temporary planning permission is due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. As checks continue to be required, we are seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF.

### Application for full planning permission

Defra, HMRC and DfT will submit a full planning application in early 2025. A suite of documents will be prepared to support the planning application, and a number of these reports will relate to the consideration of environmental factors. These are used to identify environmental effects of a development, enabling these to be considered as part of the full planning application.

We have already engaged with local residents, businesses, and stakeholders in October 2024 and will continue these discussions as we review feedback and consider proposed mitigation solutions. Key topics under review include economic and social benefits, transport, air quality, lighting, landscape, contamination, noise, and ecology.

For more information on the full planning application, visit the [Join the Conversation](#) page, download the exhibition boards, and review the 'Planning Context' board.



## Frequently Asked Questions

We appreciate there is a lot of background related to this project and therefore we have provided some FAQs to help provide further context to aid engagement conversations and your feedback considerations. These can be viewed below, and will be updated throughout the project.

If you do have any further queries related to the site, the full planning application or the engagement, please do not hesitate to contact the project's community engagement team on:

Email: [contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](mailto:contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk)  
Telephone: 020 3900 3676

<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="SEARCH"/>	<input type="button" value="RESET"/>
<hr/>		
Who is bringing forward the planning application for Sevington IBF?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
Why is the government seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
Will there be any physical changes to current facilities?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
I can't attend the upcoming events. Will there be other ways for me to engage?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
How is my feedback being used?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
What is the purpose of these upcoming engagement events?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
When is the planning application being submitted?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	
I have an operational query. Can I contact you?	<input type="button" value="○"/>	



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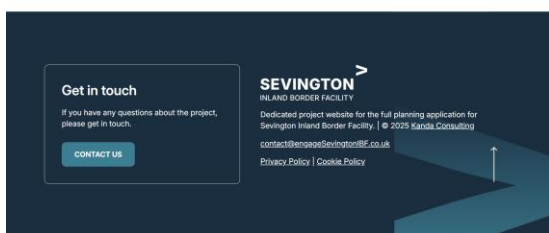
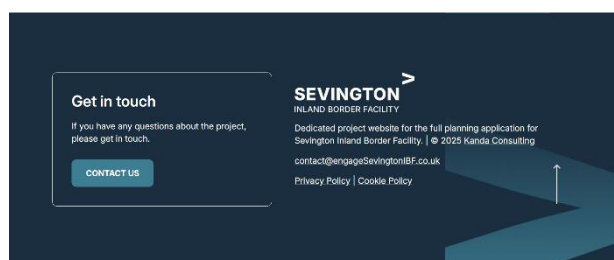


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## Frequently Asked Questions

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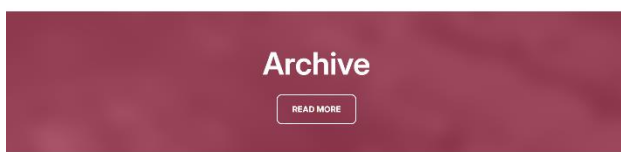
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Telephone: 020 3900 3676

Who is bringing forward the planning application for Sevington IBF?	⊖
Why is the government seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF?	⊖
Will there be any physical changes to current facilities?	⊖
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How is my feedback being used?	⊖
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When is the planning application being submitted?	⊖
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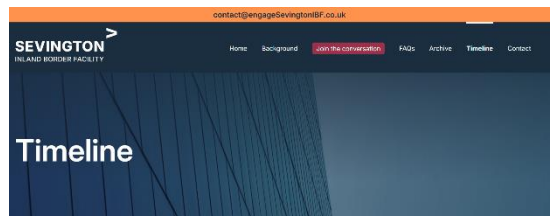
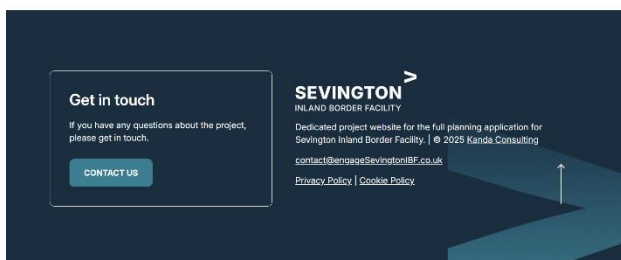
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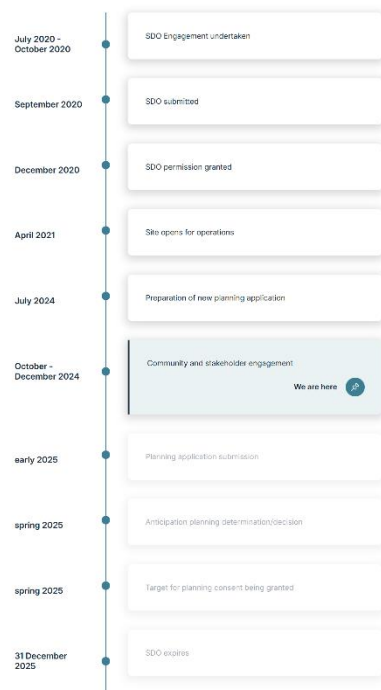
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## Project Timeline

Below is a timeline which outlines the history and current progression of Sevington IBF in terms of initial planning, site operations commencement, the full planning application and engagement activities. Please note that future planning timescales shown are indicative and are subject to pre-application discussions.



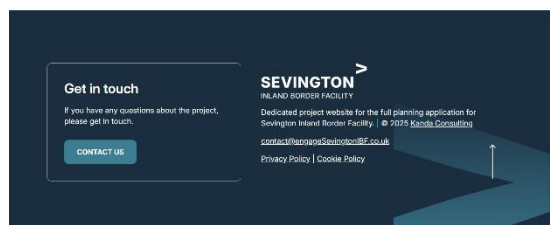
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# Contact us

We hope to be able to meet many of you at one of our public events or during some of our direct engagement activities with immediate neighbours and stakeholders.

However, if you do need to contact the team outside of the engagement events, you can do so using one of the following channels.

Please note that there are different contacts for 1) planning/ engagement enquiries and 2) general site management enquiries/ issues reporting.

---

## For planning/engagement enquiries

E: [contact@engagesevingtonlbf.co.uk](mailto:contact@engagesevingtonlbf.co.uk)

FAO: KAN0722, Floor 5, 10 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4UQ

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## For general enquiries/issues reporting

E: [complaints.sevingtonlbf@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.sevingtonlbf@hmrc.gov.uk)

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For more information please [Visit our privacy notice](#)

## Get in touch

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**Your email address *(Required)***

**Your home address**

**Your postcode**

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**SUBMIT**

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A dark blue banner with a stylized white arrow pointing upwards and to the right. On the left, a white-bordered box contains the text "Get in touch" in bold, followed by "If you have any questions about the project, please get in touch." and a blue button labeled "CONTACT US". To the right of the box, the text "SEVINGTON" is in large white letters with a white arrow pointing to the right, followed by "INLAND BORDER FACILITY" in smaller white letters. Below this, it says "Dedicated project website for the full planning application for Sevington Inland Border Facility. | © 2025 Kanda Consulting" and "contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk". At the bottom, it says "Privacy Policy | Cookie Policy".

# Appendix V – Stage One: Exhibition Boards

## Welcome

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

Many thanks for coming to this event or reviewing these boards on the project website. We very much appreciate your interest in this nationally significant infrastructure project.

### Why we are here

This event is to engage with you on the full planning application for Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF) which sits at junction 10a of the M20.

An Inland Border Facility (IBF) is a location where documentation and physical checks take place on goods entering and leaving the UK. Sevington border control post (BCP), which sits within the Sevington IBF site, is vital to ensure food and products supplied to the UK consumers are safe. Sevington IBF and BCP are essential in allowing the government to conduct necessary inspections on imports and exports, ensuring that commercial consignments comply with tax, customs, and biosecurity regulations.

Sevington IBF was granted temporary planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (MHCLG) in December 2020, through a Special Development Order (SDO), and its first phase of operations began in April 2021.

The SDO granted a temporary planning permission which expires 31 December 2025. Given it is currently crucial to ensure national biosecurity at the UK border, the team is seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF and Border Control Post (BCP) operations.



Aerial view of Sevington Inland Border Facility

### About engagement – Areas for discussion

We welcome your involvement in discussions about the current Sevington IBF and your experiences as neighbours to the site as an important local resident, business or key stakeholder.

Through our discussions with residents, businesses and stakeholders, we hope to understand local priorities and sentiments to inform our full planning application.

These discussions are part of a wider, two-staged engagement programme that we will be carrying out over the next few months.

## Meet the Team

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

Joint applicants Defra, HMRC and DfT have appointed a specialist team of consultants for Sevington IBF:



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

#### Defra

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) is responsible for improving and protecting the environment, and supporting the UK's food, farming and fishing industries. It is responsible for operating the Border Control Post on site and is the lead department progressing the full planning application.



#### JLL

JLL is a global real estate consulting company, and is the planning consultant for Sevington IBF.



HM Revenue  
& Customs

#### HMRC

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax, payments and customs authority. It is the designated operator of the site, primarily overseeing the long-term management of Sevington IBF, and handles inbound and outbound goods checks.



#### Waterman Group

Waterman Group is a leading engineering and environmental consultancy specialising in Net Zero sustainability, building services, structures, and transport and infrastructure. Waterman Group is undertaking various environmental and technical reports in support of a future full planning permission for Sevington IBF.



Department  
for Transport

#### DfT

The Department for Transport (DfT) plans and invests in transport infrastructure to maintain and improve the UK transport network. DfT is the owner of the Sevington IBF site.



#### Kanda

Kanda is a specialist in working with community organisations, residents and businesses to ensure they offer meaningful, early input into projects in the built environment. Kanda is leading the community engagement for this project.



## About Sevington IBF

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

### Site Context

This site is located to the southeast of Ashford at junction 10a of the M20, approximately 22 miles west of Dover. It is strategically located along this route and serves the European access points at Dover and Folkestone. The site includes two parcels:

- **Sevington IBF (48 ha):** Operates as an Inland Border Facility for checks on goods entering/leaving the UK and as a Border Control Post for sanitary and phytosanitary inspections.
- **Sevington East (45 ha):** Undeveloped grassland. A public footpath runs east-west through this area, now reopened after construction, with the rest of the land set aside for biodiversity enhancement.

### What happens at Sevington IBF

#### National significance

Since the United Kingdom exited the European Union, Sevington IBF has been essential in enabling HM Government to undertake the required level of inspections on import and export of commercial consignments from the UK to/from all third countries, to ensure they meet requirements on taxes, customs and biosecurity.

Within the Sevington IBF site, the Border Control Post (BCP) is crucial in ensuring national biosecurity at the UK border, with documentary and physical checks on goods based on risk. Temporary planning permission is due to expire in December 2025, and we are seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF, as checks continue to be required.



Green line boundary of the Sevington Inland Border Facility and Sevington East site

### Why Sevington is a good location

The government initially acquired the site because of its strategic location. Situated on the M20, about 50 miles southeast of London and 22 miles west of Dover, the site offers direct access to the Short Straits ports, including the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel terminal at Folkestone.

It is also strategically located near a key HGV route between the Port of Dover, Eurotunnel and the rest of the country on the south-eastern edge of Ashford. This offers benefits in terms of keeping HGV traffic away from urban areas and local communities.

## Planning Context

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

### Explaining planning at Sevington

Given the often technical nature of planning, we thought it would be helpful to provide background on the existing permission (SDO), full planning application, and how we will engage with you on the process.

#### Q What is an SDO and why was this needed instead of a standard planning application through Ashford Borough Council?

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has the power to grant a Special Development Order (SDO), providing planning permission for development of land specified within the order. SDOs can be used for planning proposals of national significance, including an Inland Border Facility.

#### Q Why was the first planning permission temporary?

Sevington IBF was considered temporary because it was established to address the immediate logistical and regulatory challenges posed by EU exit. The site was intended to provide a short-to-medium-term solution for handling customs checks and border processes while more permanent infrastructure and systems were developed.

#### Q How is planning permission being sought this time?

Defra and its joint applicants, HMRC and DfT, will be submitting a full planning application in early 2025.

### Exploring environmental factors

Documents will be prepared to support the full planning application, and a number of these reports will relate to the consideration of environmental factors.

These assessments and studies are used to identify environmental effects of a development (which can be beneficial or negative) – allowing these to be considered as part of the review of any planning application.

Through this work, the team will review current solutions put in place to manage any environmental impacts identified, to consider whether these are appropriate for the long-term use of Sevington IBF.

### Engagement

We are talking to local residents, businesses and local area stakeholders now, as the team is currently considering which environmental factors / topics should be explored and assessed.

In the following boards, we have presented environmental topics which the team will be reviewing as part of its technical work for the full planning application. For each topic, we are keen to hear:

- 1 What is your experience of that topic, relating to Sevington IBF today?
- 2 Is there a specific aspect related to that topic that you feel the team should explore?

## Socio-economic Benefits

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

There are a number of socio-economic benefits that have been, or are set to be generated from Sevington IBF:



### Major Local Employer:

Sevington IBF is one of the region's largest employers, with up to **800 people** currently working on-site or supporting Sevington IBF and BCP. As per Sodexo and HMRC's travel survey, a significant portion of the workforce—**more than 55%**—resides within **10 miles** of Sevington IBF.



### Economic Impact on Local SMEs:

The benefits of Sevington IBF extend beyond direct employment. Sevington IBF plays a vital role in the local economy, contributing approximately **£2.38 million** to nearly **40 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** in the surrounding area through its supply chain (Sodexo's HMRC Inland Border Facilities Social Impact Report, July 2023 – June 2024).



### Commitment to Social Value:

Sevington IBF actively supports a **social value strategy** that ensures meaningful contributions to the local community. According to Sodexo's Social Impact Report (July 2023 – June 2024), this includes:

- > **£782,000** generated in social value
- > Employment of on-site apprentices and **102 training places** provided for disadvantaged groups
- > Donation of **28.4 tonnes** of legacy equipment through partnerships like the 'Waste to Wonder' initiative and Jacob's Well Appeal
- > Ongoing support for volunteering and charitable donation efforts

## Transport and Access

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

The location of Sevington IBF was carefully considered and selected as it's along the existing route from the Port of Dover and Folkestone on the M20, meaning it would not contribute any additional traffic to the route.

In spite of this, measures to mitigate any traffic impacts of Sevington IBF were introduced through an Operational Management Plan (OMP), which incorporated a Traffic Management Plan, Signage Strategy and Staff Travel Plan. Some of the key features of these approaches are outlined below:

### Access and egress:

- > The primary routes for accessing the site via the Strategic Roads Network are the M20 and A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road.
- > HGVs approaching from Ashford are encouraged to exit the M20 at junction 10a and use the A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road to reach the A2070 Orbital Park roundabout.
- > A signalled junction on the A2070 dual carriageway provides direct access to and from Sevington IBF.
- > Procedures are in place to prevent HGVs from queuing back onto the road network leading to the site.



> Map showing the site location, access / egress point and the key routes to the site using the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and Local Road Network (LRN).  
Source: Mott MacDonald

### Capacity management:

- > Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras monitor vehicle movements to identify when the site is nearing capacity.
- > When the site reaches 60% capacity (Amber status) or 80% capacity (Red status), messaging is disseminated on the Strategic Road Network and the Government website to deter HGVs from using the site.

### Site operations:

- > Upon entering the site, HGVs stop at the Vehicle Entry Check Point and are directed to vacant spaces.
- > A one-way system is in place for vehicle movements within the site. 300 overflow spaces are available to accommodate increased traffic on busier days.

### Staff travel:

- > HMRC has appointed a Travel Plan coordinator to implement and monitor travel initiatives.
- > These initiatives include free staff transport, a car share scheme, and travel and car park surveys.
- > 357 car parking spaces are available for staff, accessed via a dedicated entrance on Church Road.



## Air Quality

Managing air quality in and around Sevington IBF is important to the health of neighbouring communities and businesses, along with the staff and visitors who come to the site. There are a number of key points to note on this as regards current operations on site:



Modelling undertaken for the initial Special Development Order (planning consent) showed no significant increase in air pollution as a result of Sevington IBF.



Traffic monitoring is currently conducted as part of the Operational Management Plan (OMP). The OMP requires that traffic data is monitored to ensure actual traffic numbers do not exceed those used in the air quality modelling.



Idling is not permitted for any vehicles. All stationary vehicles' engines must be switched off while on-site and under inspection, including refrigerated vehicles.



Landscaping and new planting around the site is designed to manage CO2 levels across the site.

## Flooding & Waste



Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS\*) design and control measures have been embedded into Sevington and are considered to be effective in managing pollution and discharges from Sevington IBF.



The site has been designed to operate a zero-pollution goal at in terms of spillage and contamination.



The workforce includes fully trained security staff, who regularly patrol the site including a pollution control team. Cleaning contractors are appointed to fulfil the daily cleaning requirements.

\* Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are designed to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible where, similar to natural drainage, water is encouraged to permeate into the ground and drain away/ be treated naturally.



Example of green space at Sevington IBF

## Lighting

### Current lighting design

We understand that lighting is a key area of consideration for neighbours and communities surrounding Sevington IBF. Below we have outlined the strategy behind the current lighting provided on site:

- > Current lighting plan was carefully designed, in collaboration with landscape and ecological experts, to minimise the impact of light on the surrounding environment.
- > A balance has been sought between the number and height of lighting columns to provide sufficient light for safe site operations, while reducing visual impact.
- > LED lights with a warm colour temperature of 3000K are being used, which follows recommendations, to protect bats and other wildlife.
- > All lights are set at a flat angle (zero degrees) to direct light downwards and avoid shining into the sky.
- > Light poles are 12m, 10m, or 8m tall, which helps to minimise the effect on wildlife that is sensitive to light.

This approach follows the Bat Conservation Trust and Lighting Professionals' guidelines.

### Current lighting mitigation measures

- > The detailed landscape design includes earth bunds and tree/shrub planting to screen views of taller elements, such as lighting columns, wherever possible.
- > Lighting columns have been limited to operational areas only, leaving the surrounding green infrastructure as an unlit buffer, reducing nighttime visual impacts on nearby residents.

### Lighting Restrictions

- > Lighting has been installed in the 'suspended' northern and southern plots; these will remain unlit until movement is detected.
- > Lighting columns have been removed from the central viewing corridor, with landscaping enhancements that help shield lighting glare.



Example of facility lighting measures

With the numbers of traffic movements in and around the site, the team appreciates how important it is to manage noise and vibration for the sake of its surrounding communities and workers on site.



Example of Acoustic Fencing



## Noise Mitigation Measures

To reduce noise impact on nearby neighbours, acoustic fencing (up to 5m) and bunds were constructed around the site using excavated material.



## Ongoing Noise Monitoring & Reporting

Since the site became operational, we have implemented long-term ambient noise monitoring at key locations as below:

- > One location representing Sevington Church/Church Lane.
- > Another location representing properties on Church Lane. Noise levels are measured monthly and reported to Kent County Council.
- > One at a location to represent properties in Nightingale Close/Kingfisher Close.

If noise levels exceed acceptable limits, additional measures will be implemented promptly.

# Ecology and Landscape

## Biodiversity plus visual impacts

We recognise residents' concerns about protecting the eastern plot from development. Efforts have already been made to boost biodiversity and create a buffer between Sevington IBF and Mersham, with more enhancements planned.

No part of Sevington East is within a sensitive environmental area, as defined within Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. It is intended that the area's biodiversity will be significantly improved as part of the plans to seek full planning permission for the site.

## How Biodiversity is Currently Managed

- > A public footpath, which has been upgraded to a bridleway, remains open.
- > Bi-annual reviews of planting will continue until 2025. Any failed plants will be replaced with older ones to match the original planting age.
- > Since 2021, natural features like ponds, swales, and drainage systems have been introduced.



Example of biodiversity around the site

## Proposed Biodiversity Enhancements

As in the past, there are no plans to develop Sevington East. There is currently a long-term ecological plan in place which was secured through a condition attached to the 2022 SDO. The proposed Biodiversity Net Gain on Sevington East legally protects the Sevington East site for at least 30 years.

These include around 15,000 plants being planted, 84,500 cubed metres of stockpiled soil being offset to support the improvements, and the introduction of bird and bat boxes within the vegetation.

These ecological enhancements not only offset the direct ecological impacts of the Sevington IBF scheme but also create a more biodiverse environment.

## Expected Impact on Biodiversity

Planned improvements will significantly increase biodiversity, connecting the habitats created in the western site to the wider green network. This will result in better habitats for many species across the area.

Once full biodiversity enhancements are complete, these will contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain improvement over and above what is required. The proposed BNG for Sevington East legally protects the site for at least 30 years. To ensure long-term biodiversity success, we're refining our planting strategy to address past challenges and protect future enhancements.



## Local Benefits

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

### Continuing to bring a whole raft of benefits to the area

With the full planning permission for Sevington IBF, the site will be able to continue to deliver and enhance benefits for the local community and nationally. These include:



**Local employment:** Sevington IBF is one of the area's largest employers. Up to 800 people work at, or in support of, the IBF and border control post, with more than 55% of employees living within 10 miles of the site.



**Local economy spend:** Sevington IBF supports the local economy, with approximately £2.38m contributed to nearly 40 SMEs in the local supply chain.



**Social value:** Between July 2023 and June 2024, creating £782,000 in social value, offering on-site apprenticeships, and providing 102 training places to disadvantaged groups.



**Biodiversity enhancements:** Since Sevington IBF opened in 2021, we've added native plants, ponds, and sustainable drainage. Once complete, the biodiversity improvements will contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain\* improvement. This also serves to legally protect Sevington East from development for at least 30 years.



**National biosecurity:** Checks on certain Short Straits imports are essential to protect our biosecurity and prevent an outbreak of disease that would severely damage our food supply, the environment and future trade.



**Responding to central government policy:** Full planning permission for Sevington IBF directly supports the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework, which prioritises freight and logistics as a key sector, and future local growth plans.



**Kent Resilience Strategy ('KRS'):** Sevington IBF will support the KRS which aims to develop a new holistic traffic management system, using a combination of technology and increased site-based lorry parking capacity to remove regular queues off the Strategic Road Network ('SRN').

\* Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. BNG makes sure development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development. In England, BNG is mandatory in the Town and Country Planning Act.

## Join the conversation

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

Thank you for taking the time to read through information provided on these boards, either at one of our events or on the project website.

We would now welcome your thoughts on the topic areas as outlined, or on any other wider matters relating to Sevington IBF, to feed into the full planning application process. You can do this in one of the following ways:

- > Pick up a feedback form at one of our events and return this to us by **02 November 2024** using the Freepost envelope provided
- > Go online at [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) and provide your feedback using the online form on the 'Join the Conversation' page
- > Drop us an email at [contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](mailto:contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) with your thoughts, being clear to outline which topic area your comments relate to
- > Call us on **020 3900 3676** to talk us through your views where these will be recorded by Kanda Consulting, the community engagement consultants for the project

For those unable to attend these events or who wish to revisit the information provided, these exhibition boards are available on the project website [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) or in printed format, on request\* – see contact details above.

\*In a commitment to keeping printing to a minimum for environmental reasons, we will only print and post copies of the boards if these are required for access/ disability purposes.

### Next steps engagement programme

As previously mentioned, these discussions are part of a wider, two-staged engagement programme that we will be carrying out over the next few months to inform the full planning application.

**Stage 1**  
Listening

**Now**

Hearing about your experiences of Sevington IBF to help inform the early environmental exploration work being carried out.



**Stage 2**  
Responding

**December**

Reporting back on environmental studies and assessments undertaken and potential solutions to issues raised.

It is anticipated that a full planning application for Sevington IBF will be submitted in early 2025.

Thank you for your interest in the Sevington IBF project. We very much welcome your thoughts and encourage you to get involved in providing your feedback.

## Appendix VI – Stage One: Hard Copy Feedback Form



We would be grateful if you could take a few moments to provide your views on Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF). Please fill out this form and leave it with a project team member here today. All information you give us will be stored safely, treated confidentially, and only used in connection with this project.

To find out more details about the full planning application, please visit our website: [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk)

Under the General Data Protection Regulation, we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect from you. The information we would like to collect is optional and will not be used in a way that identifies you. The information you provide will be used for statistical and research purposes only and will be used in accordance with our privacy policy.

You can also read our full privacy policy here: [www.kandaconsulting.co.uk/privacy-policy/](http://www.kandaconsulting.co.uk/privacy-policy/)

---

### Contact details

Name	<input type="text"/>		
Address	<input type="text"/>		
Postcode	<input type="text"/>	Telephone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>		

Would you like to be added to our email mailing list to receive project updates?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**1 How did you hear about the project?**

- ☐ Newsletter in the post
- ☐ Search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Recommended by a friend or a colleague
- ☐ Other:

**2 Do you believe that Sevington IBF should have full planning permission to address the need for national biosecurity requirements?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

**3 Please give a reason for your answer.**

**4 What is your experience of the socio-economic benefits, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

**5 Is there a specific aspect relating to the socio-economic benefits that you feel the team should explore?**

**6** What is your experience of transport and access, relating to Sevington IBF today?

**7** Is there a specific aspect relating to transport and access that you feel the team should explore?

**8** What is your experience of air quality, climate change and wind, relating to Sevington IBF today?

**9** Is there a specific aspect relating to air quality, climate change and wind that you feel the team should explore?

- 10** What is your experience with ground, flooding and waste, relating to Sevington IBF today?

- 11** Is there a specific aspect relating to ground, flooding and waste that you feel the team should explore?

- 12** What is your experience of light pollution, solar glare and access to light, relating to Sevington IBF today?

- 13** Is there a specific aspect relating to light pollution, solar glare and access to light that you feel the team should explore?

**14** What is your experience of noise and vibration, relating to Sevington IBF today?

**15** Is there a specific aspect relating to noise and vibration that you feel the team should explore?

**16** What is your experience of ecology and landscape, relating to Sevington IBF today?

**17** Is there a specific aspect relating to ecology and landscape that you feel the team should explore?

**18** To what extent do you agree with Sevington East being a Biodiversity Net Gain site as part of Sevington IBF, which will contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain improvement when complete?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neutral / no view
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

**19** Please give a reason for your answer.

**20** Do you have any other comments you would like to add about Sevington IBF?



## Appendix VII – Stage One: Digital Feedback Form



### Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF) Feedback Form

We would be grateful if you could take a few moments to provide your views on Sevington IBF.

All information you give us will be stored safely, treated confidentially, and only used in connection with this project. However, contact details are not required, should you wish not to provide them.

1→ What is your postcode?

Type your answer here...

OK



## 2 → How did you hear about the project?

Choose as many as you like

- ☐ A Newsletter in the post
- ☐ B Search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
- ☐ C Social media
- ☐ D Recommended by a friend or a colleague
- ☐ E Other

**OK** press Enter ↵

## 3 → Do you believe that Sevington IBF should have full planning permission to address the need for national biosecurity requirements?

- ☐ A Yes
- ☐ B No
- ☐ C I don't know

**OK**



Typeform - Create - Google Chrome

4 → Please give a reason for your answer.

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

5 → What is your experience of socio-economic benefits, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

6 → Is there a specific aspect relating to the socio-economic benefits that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

7 → What is your experience of transport and access, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

8 → Is there a specific aspect relating to transport and access that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

9 → What is your experience of air quality, climate change and wind, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

10 → Is there a specific aspect relating to air quality, climate change and wind that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌥ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

11 → What is your experience with ground, flooding and waste, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌥ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

12 → Is there a specific aspect relating to ground, flooding and waste that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

13 → What is your experience of light pollution, solar glare and access to light, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

14 → Is there a specific aspect relating to light pollution, solar glare and access to light that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

15 → What is your experience of noise and vibration, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

16 → Is there a specific aspect relating to noise and vibration that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

17 → What is your experience of ecology and landscape, relating to Sevington IBF today?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK



18 → Is there a specific aspect relating to ecology and landscape that you feel the team should explore?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

19 → To what extent do you agree with Sevington East being a Biodiversity Net Gain site as part of Sevington IBF, which will contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain improvement when complete?

☐ A Strongly agree

☐ B Somewhat agree

☐ C Neutral / no view

☐ D Somewhat disagree

☐ E Strongly disagree

OK

20 → Please give a reason for your answer.

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK

21 → Do you have any other comments you would like to add about  
Sevington IBF?

Type your answer here...

Shift ⌘ + Enter ↵ to make a line break

OK



**SEVINGTON**

INLAND BORDER FACILITY

# HM Government is seeking full planning permission for Sevington Inland Border Facility.

Come to our engagement events  
to learn more and share your views.  
Head over to our website to find out more

Join the conversation

## Appendix IX – Stage Two: Flyer

### Stage 2 Community Engagement on Sevington Inland Border Facility January 2025

**SEVINGTON**  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY



▲ Aerial view of Sevington IBF

Dear Neighbour,

In October 2024 representatives from HM Government undertook a listening exercise, to gain insights into the experiences of local residents and key stakeholders regarding the operation of Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF).

We would like to thank everyone who shared their experiences at the community events or online through the project website. Feedback received has helped inform the scope and priorities for technical surveys for the full planning application. **To learn more about the feedback, please come to one of our Stage 2 community engagement events – details overleaf.**

As a reminder, Sevington IBF was granted temporary planning permission through a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020 to ensure essential on-site operations could commence quickly. With the temporary consent due to expire in December 2025, the Government is seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF to ensure the continuation of security and required border checks.

We are committed to continuing engagement with neighbours throughout the planning process. **Please see overleaf for details on how to get involved in Stage 2 community engagement, before the submission of a full planning application.**

### Upcoming Stage 2 community engagement events for Sevington IBF January 2025

**SEVINGTON**  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

We welcome you to attend one of our Stage 2 engagement events, where you will be able to get an update from the project team, ask questions, and share your views, in advance of the final full planning application being submitted.

Details of the events are as follows:

- Friday 17th January, 4pm – 8pm**  
 **Mersham Village Hall, The Forstal, Ashford TN25 6NU**
- Saturday 18th January, 12pm – 4pm**  
 **Willesborough Womens Institute Hall, Ashford, TN24 0JG**



If you are unable to attend these events, you can find information and share your views from 17th January 2025 at the website below or by scanning the QR code:

[www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk)



SCAN HERE

### Get in touch

If you have any questions or would like to be kept up-to-date on the project, you can contact us via:

- [contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](mailto:contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) **020 3900 3676**
- FAO KAN0722, Floor 5, 10 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4UQ**

# Appendix X – Stage Two: Emails and Community Update

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you again on behalf of our clients, the Department for Transport (DfT), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), to provide an update on the full planning application for **Sevington** Inland Border Facility (**IBF**).

As a reminder, **Sevington IBF** was granted temporary planning permission by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020. The SDO granted temporary planning permission, which expires 31st December 2025. To ensure the continuation of security and checks at the UK border, the team is now seeking full planning permission for **Sevington IBF** and its Border Control Post (BCP) operations.

As you know, in October 2024, HM Government held a number of stakeholder meetings and two community engagement events. This provided an opportunity for the team to evaluate the current **Sevington IBF** and its relationship with the local environment, with the aim of identifying potential site improvements. We were very grateful to the community for sharing their experiences with us, either directly at events or online through the project website. The feedback has been useful in helping us to inform the scope and priorities for technical surveys and site improvements for the full planning application.

We previously communicated that we planned to hold a second stage of engagement (Stage 2) in December 2024. This engagement was intended to provide an update on the progress of the planning application, including the feedback received, ahead of submitting a full planning application in early 2025. **We can now confirm that the next stage of engagement will take place on 17th and 18th January 2025**, to allow sufficient time to conduct technical assessments and respond to the feedback received. The feedback received, and the team's response to this, will be presented in the engagement materials, which will be available to view at the engagement events or on the project website. We will provide further updates in due course, including details of upcoming engagement events (dates/ times). In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the team at [contact@engagesevingtonibf.co.uk](mailto:contact@engagesevingtonibf.co.uk).

Kind regards

**Sevington Inland Border Facility – Full Planning Application**

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you all again on behalf of our clients, the Department for Transport (DfT), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), in relation to the full planning application for Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF).

Following my email below back in December 2024, please see attached flyer with details of the forthcoming stage 2 community engagement events in January 2025.

We would be delighted to welcome you to one of the engagement sessions but, if you have any queries in the meantime about the engagement events or the proposals, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

.





Dear neighbour,

I hope you've been keeping well. I am writing to you again on behalf of our clients, the Department for Transport (DfT), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), to provide an update on the full planning application for Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF).

As a reminder, Sevington IBF was granted temporary planning permission by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020. The SDO granted temporary planning permission, which expires 31st December 2025. To ensure the continuation of security and checks at the UK border, the team is now seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF and its Border Control Post (BCP) operations.

As you may recall, in October 2024, HM Government held a number of stakeholder meetings and two community engagement events. This provided an opportunity for the team to evaluate the current Sevington IBF and its relationship with the local environment, with the aim of identifying potential site improvements.

We were very grateful to the community for sharing their experiences with us, either directly at events or online through the project website. The feedback has been useful in helping us to inform the scope and priorities for technical surveys and site improvements for the full planning application.

We previously communicated that we planned to hold a second stage of engagement (Stage 2) in December 2024. This engagement was intended to provide an update on the progress of the planning application, including the feedback received, ahead of submitting a full planning application in early 2025. **We can now confirm that the next stage of engagement will take place on the 17th and 18th of January 2025** to allow sufficient time to conduct technical assessments and respond to the feedback received. The feedback received and the team's response to this will be presented in the engagement materials, which will be available to view at the engagement events or on the project website.

We will provide further updates in due course, including details of upcoming engagement events (dates/ times). In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the team at [contact@engagesevingtonibf.co.uk](mailto:contact@engagesevingtonibf.co.uk).

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas break.

Kind regards,

Sevington IBF Engagement team

## Appendix XI – Stage Two: Socia Media Advert

**SEVINGTON**  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

Join the conversation

**HM Government is seeking full planning permission for Sevington Inland Border Facility.**

You are warmly invited to attend our engagement events, where you can learn more and share your views.

Visit our website for more information.





# Appendix XII – Stage Two: Exhibition Boards

## Welcome



Aerial view of Sevington Inland Border Facility



Thank you for coming to this Stage 2 engagement event or reviewing these boards on the project website. We appreciate your interest in the proposed full planning application for the continuing operation of Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF).

### Why we are here

This event is to provide an update on the full planning application for Sevington IBF since our last community engagement in October 2024, ahead of submitting the full planning application.

As a reminder, Sevington IBF was granted temporary planning permission from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) through a Special Development Order (SDO) in 2020, 2021, and 2022. The first phase of operations began in April 2021.


The temporary planning permission expires on 31st December 2025. Given the continued operation of the site remains crucial for UK security and biosecurity, the applicant is seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF and Border Control Post (BCP) operations.

### Continuing community engagement








Thank you to those who shared your experiences of Sevington IBF as part of our first stage of engagement in October 2024.

We are grateful for your feedback. This has informed the scope and priorities of our technical surveys, as well as potential operational changes. These focus on areas such as lighting, landscaping, ecology, noise, and transport and access. A summary of the feedback received from the first round of engagement can be viewed on these display boards.

## Meet the Team



Some of you may have already met the specialist team of consultants appointed by joint planning applicants Defra, HMRC and DfT at our Stage 1 engagement events; they are listed below, along with a reminder of the government departments involved.

 <p><b>Defra</b></p> <p>The Department for Environment, Food &amp; Rural Affairs (Defra) is responsible for improving and protecting the environment, and supporting the UK's food, farming and fishing industries. It is responsible for operating the Border Control Post on site and is the lead department progressing the full planning application.</p>	 <p><b>JLL</b></p> <p>JLL is a global real estate consulting company, and is the planning consultant for Sevington IBF.</p>
 <p><b>HM Revenue &amp; Customs</b></p> <p>HM Revenue &amp; Customs (HMRC) is the UK's tax, payments and customs authority. It is the designated operator of the site, primarily overseeing the long-term management of Sevington IBF, and handles inbound and outbound goods checks.</p>	 <p><b>Waterman Group</b></p> <p>Waterman Group is a leading engineering and environmental consultancy specialising in Net Zero sustainability, building services, structures, and transport and infrastructure. Waterman Group is undertaking the various environmental and technical reports in support of a future full planning application for Sevington IBF.</p>
 <p><b>Department for Transport</b></p> <p>The Department for Transport (DfT) plans and invests in transport infrastructure to maintain and improve the UK transport network. DfT is the owner of the Sevington IBF site.</p>	 <p><b>BCA Design</b></p> <p>BCA Design is a specialist firm of chartered Landscape Architects with over 30 years' experience in visual assessments and logistics projects.</p>
	 <p><b>Kanda</b></p> <p>Kanda is a consultancy specialising in working with community organisations, residents, and businesses to ensure they provide meaningful, early input into projects in the built environment.</p>



## About Sevington IBF

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

### Site Context

This site is located to the southeast of Ashford at junction 10a of the M20, approximately 22 miles west of Dover. It is strategically located along this route and serves the European access points at Dover and Folkestone.

The site includes the **Sevington IBF (48 ha)**, which operates as an Inland Border Facility for checks on goods entering/leaving the UK and as a Border Control Post (BCP) for sanitary and phytosanitary checks.

### What happens at Sevington IBF

Since the United Kingdom exited the European Union, Sevington IBF has been essential in enabling HM Government to undertake the required level of inspections on import and export of commercial consignments from the UK to/from all third countries, to ensure they meet requirements on taxes, customs and biosecurity.

Within the Sevington IBF site, the BCP is crucial in ensuring national biosecurity at the UK border, with documentary and physical checks on goods based on risk. Temporary planning permission is due to expire in December 2025, and we are seeking full planning permission for Sevington IBF, as checks continue to be required beyond this date.



Indicative site boundary of Sevington IBF

### Why Sevington is a suitable location

The government initially acquired the site because of its strategic location. Situated on the M20, about 50 miles southeast of London and 22 miles west of Dover, the site offers direct access to the Short Straits ports, including the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel terminal at Folkestone.

It is also strategically located near a key HGV route between the Port of Dover, Eurotunnel and the rest of the country on the south-eastern edge of Ashford.

## Planning Context

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

### Explaining planning at Sevington

To help you understand the planning process, we've provided below, a summary on the existing temporary permission, the upcoming full planning application, and the purpose of our engagement today.

#### Q What is an SDO and why was this needed instead of a standard planning application?

The Special Development Order 2020 granted temporary permission for inland border facilities in England. The SDO is subject to conditions, including a requirement to secure the Secretary of State's approval before development starts. Four separate written submissions were made, and approvals obtained. The latest approval was dated April 2022.

#### Q Why was the first planning permission temporary?

Sevington IBF was considered temporary because it was established to address the immediate logistical and regulatory challenges posed by the EU exit. The site was intended to provide a short-to-medium-term solution for handling customs checks and border processes while more permanent infrastructure and systems were developed.

#### Q How is planning permission being sought this time?

DfT, Defra and HMRC will submit a full planning application in early 2025. We are committed to continuing engagement with all relevant stakeholders and the local community.



Overlooking Sevington IBF

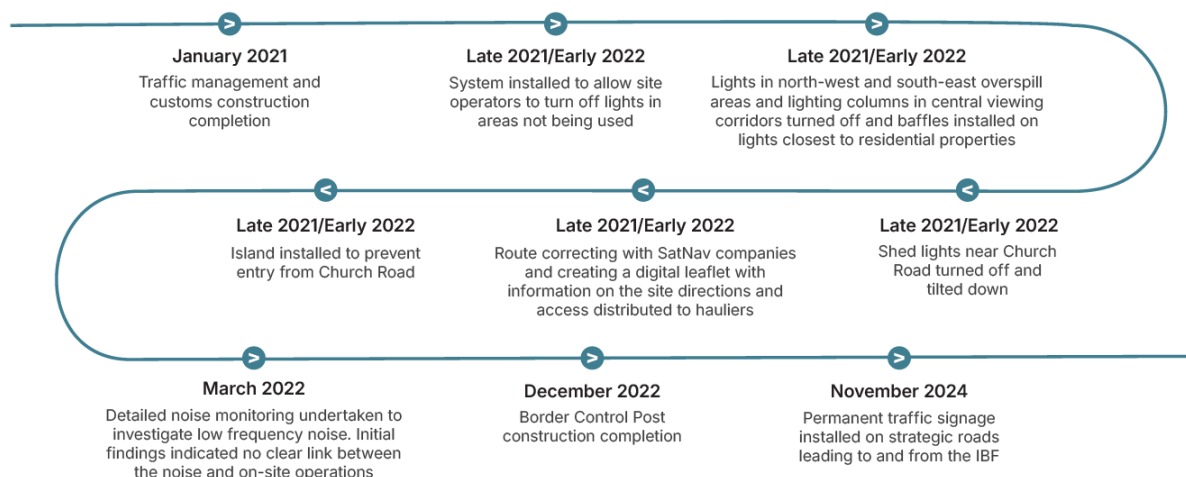
### Engagement

During this Stage 2 engagement, we are talking to local residents, businesses and local area stakeholders to provide an update on the feedback received during the first stage of community engagement. We will also be presenting proposed measures to address some of the concerns raised. The following boards present this mitigation in a 'Feedback' and 'Response' format.

## Recent Site Improvements

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

Since Sevington IBF opened in 2021, a number of site improvements have been put in place to minimise potential operational disruptions to neighbours around the site. As of today, the following mitigations have been implemented:



## Your Feedback

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

In October 2024, the team carried out a listening exercise to better understand the local community's experiences with Sevington IBF in relation to key environmental factors. The key themes of feedback included:

<p><b>Lighting</b></p> <p>This was highlighted as a key area of concern for some members of the community. Several residents reported that they had experienced adverse effects from light spill.</p>	<p><b>Traffic management</b></p> <p>Concerns were raised that, due to a lack of clear signage, lorry drivers sometimes rerouted onto narrower residential roads, creating potentially hazardous situations. Increased traffic and long queues were also highlighted.</p>	<p><b>Landscape and ecology</b></p> <p>It was felt that the landscaping and ecology commitments set out in the SDO had not been delivered effectively to date. Suggestions included improvements that could help to mitigate the effects of lighting and visual amenity.</p>	<p><b>Noise</b></p> <p>A few neighbours raised issues around noise pollution and monitoring, querying the effectiveness of the acoustic buffers.</p>

A detailed breakdown of all the themes can be viewed on the following boards.



Lighting was the most prevalent topic of feedback raised during the Stage 1 engagement in October 2024.



Existing operational lighting



Location of Sevington swim-lanes. | Source: Google Maps

## Feedback

Some members of the community said that they had experienced light spillage from Sevington IBF, and felt that this had impacted their nighttime living experiences.

Several respondents suggested limiting the light use where feasible, and enhanced planting to help mitigate some of the effects.

## Response

We appreciate concerns around light spillage from Sevington IBF. With this in mind, several measures have been proposed to mitigate light impact from the site.



To address concerns about night-time lighting, we are considering to turn off a proportion of the lights on the swim lanes at times when not operationally required, reducing their impact on the surrounding area. Lights across the entire site have already been reviewed, and several have been turned off where this is practical.



We are also exploring the possibility of extending the existing fencing along the southern boundary, to minimise light disturbance from HGVs to nearby homes.



A review of the Landscape Environmental Management Plans (LEMPs)\*, as previously submitted in support of the temporary planning consent, has been undertaken. The applicant is committed to ensuring the LEMPs are implemented in full over forthcoming planting seasons. Small areas of additional planting are proposed to supplement those outlined in the LEMPs. This will be done where feasible, considering operational needs, underground services, and land ownership. The implementation of the LEMPs, including tree buffers, will serve to help mitigate the impact of lighting.

\* The LEMP is a detailed document that outlines how a development project will manage and enhance the biodiversity and landscape features of a site.

# Transport and Access

Another area of concern highlighted during Stage 1 community engagement included transport management.

## Feedback

It was suggested that on occasion, a lack of clear signage/navigation led lorry drivers inadvertently onto narrower, potentially more hazardous roads. However, respondents noted that issues around driver re-routing had decreased more recently.

Questions were raised regarding potential traffic congestion on the highway and adjacent roads caused by vehicles entering and exiting Sevington IBF. Pedestrian access around the site was also mentioned by some respondents as needing to be reviewed and improved.



Map showing the site location, access / egress point and the key routes to the site using the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and Local Road Network (LRN). Source: Mott MacDonald

## Response



A programme of installing significant new highways signage has been undertaken over recent months and has now completed. This will help to provide clearer direction for those drivers travelling to the site.

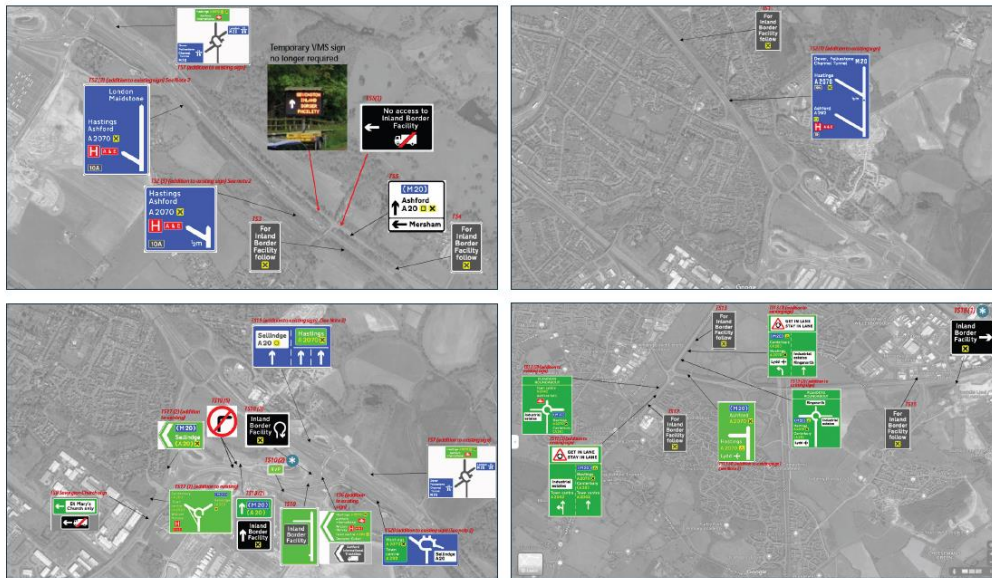


Where traffic queuing is concerned, recent traffic analysis, under normal and exceptional conditions, indicates that vehicle queuing is unlikely, except in rare circumstances. Further traffic surveying and modelling work is continuing to inform the transport assessment which will be submitted in support of the full planning application.



We understand the importance of pedestrian access and are pleased to note the recent improvements to the bridleway. Due to security concerns and operational constraints, we are unable to make significant changes to the site's layout or footpaths around the site.

Plans illustrating locations and content of permanent signs implemented around the site.



\* These signs were removed as part of the approval process and were therefore not implemented.

## Ecology and Landscape

The local community highlighted landscaping, biodiversity and ecological enhancements as one of the main priorities for the full planning application.

### Feedback

Whilst some local residents expressed concerns about the implementation of landscaped areas and biodiversity enhancements outlined in the SDO, the proposed protection of Sevington East, for at least 30 years, was welcomed. This protection will be in line with the requirement for BNG enhancement to be protected for that period of time. Respondents suggested additional measures, such as improved landscaped areas and active management, to further benefit the area.



Example of biodiversity around the site

### Response



As part of our commitment to environmental enhancement, we will ensure that the Landscape Environmental Management Plans (LEMPs), as approved through the temporary permission, will be fully implemented over the forthcoming appropriate planting seasons. It is acknowledged that various areas of planting have failed, and ongoing management and maintenance needs to be improved to ensure longer term protection and enhancement of the implemented landscaping plans as set out in the LEMPs.



In addition, BCA landscape architects have reviewed the LEMPs, along with more recent technical planting specifications. Together, once implemented, these planting proposals will provide for vastly improved landscaping from what exists at present.



BCA landscape architects have also assessed site constraints to evaluate whether a landscaping scheme can go further. Despite the location of a gas main, the requirement to keep planting along the heritage viewing corridor at a low level, and much of the site surrounds being outside of the applicant's ownership (highways land), there are smaller parcels to the northern boundary where further landscaping could be implemented.

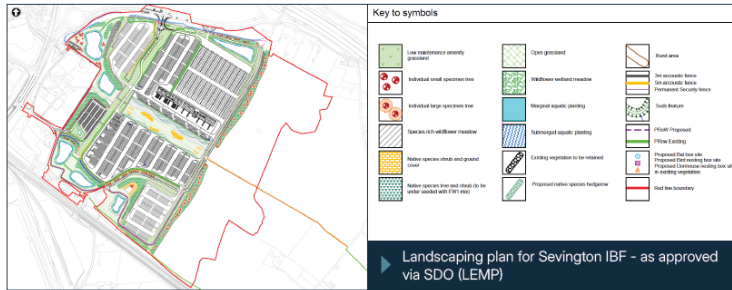


Information boards will be erected on-site, particularly along the Sevington East brideway, to educate the public about archaeological discoveries.



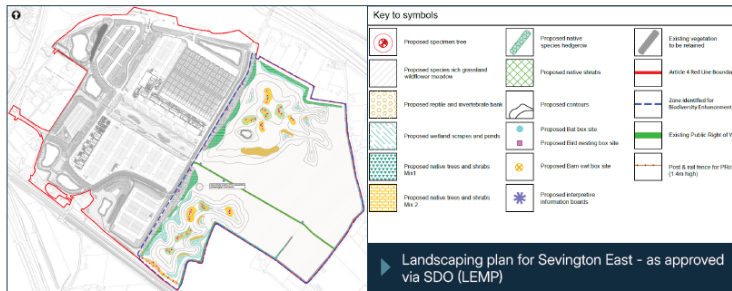
## Ecology and Landscape continued

**SEVINGTON**  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY



BCA Design were appointed to review and assess the Sevington IBF site based on the previously prepared Landscape Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) documents by Mott MacDonald. The LEMP documents outlined a detailed overview of the proposals and when fully implemented will provide a well-considered landscape and ecological scheme. The ongoing maintenance is a key element to enable the site to reach its full potential.

As part of the review, the identification of areas for additional planting for visual screening and ecological benefits was carried out. These areas have been shown on the adjacent plan and are proposed alongside the fully implemented scheme as detailed in the LEMP and the various constraints within and surrounding Sevington IBF.

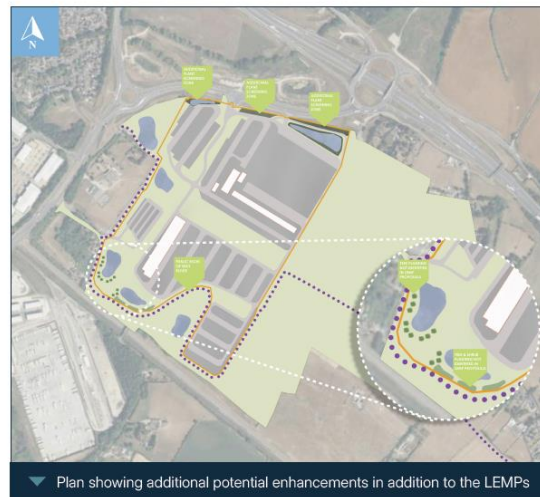
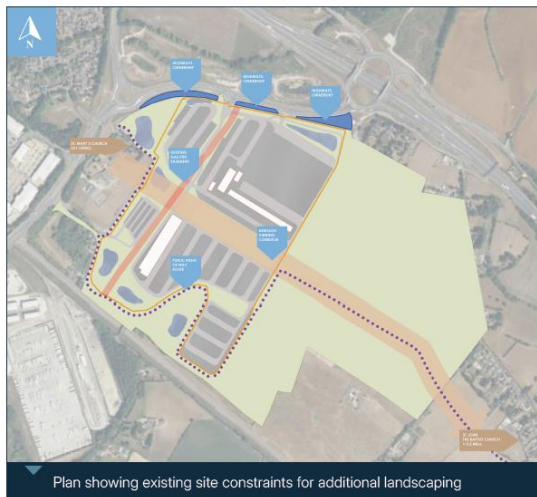


### The main constraints are:

- An existing gas pipe running through the site with a no-plant easement,
- A heritage visual connection between local grade I listed churches restricting the height of vegetation,
- Ownership of the land, where some areas are not within the curtilage of Sevington IBF and are therefore unable to be maintained as such.

## Ecology and Landscape continued


**SEVINGTON**  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY



## Other feedback

SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

Below is a summary of the feedback received on the other topic areas presented for discussion during Stage 1 community engagement.



### Noise

**Feedback**

A few residents reported experiencing LFN (Low-Frequency Noise) from HGVs manoeuvring around the south of Sevington IBF.

▶ Diagram to show layout and locations of refrigerated vehicles.

**Response**

In response to feedback, we are considering implementing a traffic rerouting scheme during off-peak hours to minimise impact on residences south of the site.

We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the acoustic buffers and will make adjustments as necessary to optimise their performance. Noise levels within the Sevington IBF site are being monitored continuously by Mott MacDonald. For the purpose of the full planning application, supplementary baseline measurements were conducted by Waterman, which comprised attended surveys (21st November 2024) and unattended surveys (between 20th November and 25th November 2024) at locations within and surrounding the site. The noise data that Waterman has collected is currently being analysed. The data will be compared against the noise levels measured by Mott MacDonald, and will be used in the assessment of operational noise. Refrigerated vehicles will continue to be positioned away from residential areas to avoid noise impacts. Please refer to the diagram above for the specific layout of where these vehicles are directed.

### Air quality, climate change and wind

#### Feedback

Overall, very few comments were shared on this topic. Respondents said that they had noticed no discernible impact on air quality but suggested that stationary/parked lorries should not be permitted to idle engines or generators.

#### Response

Please be assured that drivers are encouraged not to allow their engines to idle at Sevington IBF, in line with site regulations. We will continue to monitor compliance with this policy and ensure it is effectively communicated to all site users to help address any concerns.

### Flooding and waste

#### Feedback

Many respondents commented on how the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS\*) had worked well, although some felt that there had been issues with the SuDS not draining effectively.

A few concerns were highlighted around water drainage issues on Kingsford Street, with some suggesting re-excavation of the ponds to enhance the effectiveness of local water drainage.

#### Response


We will continue to review this specific feedback and conduct a thorough assessment of the SuDS performance as part of our technical assessments for the full planning application. This will include investigating the drainage issues on Kingsford Street and exploring potential solutions.

## Local Benefits


SEVINGTON  
INLAND BORDER FACILITY

### Continuing to bring a whole raft of benefits to the area


With full planning permission for Sevington IBF, the site will be able to continue to deliver and enhance benefits for the local community and nationally. These include:




**Local employment:** Sevington IBF is one of the area's largest employers. Up to 800 people work at, or in support of, Sevington IBF and BCP, with more than 55% of employees living within 10 miles of the site.



**Local economy spend:** Sevington IBF supports the local economy, with £2.38m contributed to nearly 40 SMEs in the local supply chain.




**Social value:** Between July 2023 and June 2024, Sevington IBF has supported a robust social value strategy, including £782,000 in social value, offering on-site apprenticeships, and providing 102 training places to disadvantaged groups.



**National biosecurity:** The site is vital to ensure animal derived products and plants supplied to UK consumers from the EU are safe.



**Biodiversity enhancements:** Since Sevington IBF opened in 2021, native plants, ponds, and sustainable drainage has been integrated into the wider site. Once complete, the biodiversity improvements will contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain\*. It is proposed that the BNG at Sevington East will be secured through legal agreement for 30 years, protecting Sevington East from development during that time.



**Kent Resilience Strategy ('KRS'):** Sevington IBF will support the KRS which aims to develop a new holistic traffic management system, using a combination of technology and increased site-based lorry parking capacity to remove regular queues off the Strategic Road Network ('SRN').

\* Biodiversity Net Gain ( BNG ) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats.



## Join the conversation

Thank you for taking the time to read through the information provided on these boards or on the project website.

We welcome your thoughts on the updates provided, or on any other wider matters relating to Sevington IBF, to feed into the full planning application process. You can do this in one of the following ways:

- Pick up a feedback form at one of our events and return this to us;
- Go online at [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) and provide your feedback using the online survey on the 'Join the Conversation' page;
- Drop us an email at [contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](mailto:contact@engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) with your thoughts;
- Call us on 020 3900 3676 to talk through your views.

For those unable to attend these events or who wish to revisit the information provided, these exhibition boards are available on the project website [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk) or in printed format, on request\* – see contact details above.

\*In a commitment to keeping printing to a minimum for environmental reasons, we will only print and post copies of the boards if these are required for access/disability purposes.

## Next steps engagement programme

This second stage of community engagement provides an update on feedback received in relation to local experiences of Sevington IBF. It also outlines some of the potential mitigation measures proposed, ahead of the submission of a full planning application. Additional technical assessments are underway to identify further mitigation solutions; these will also be communicated to the local community in due course.



It is anticipated that a full planning application for Sevington IBF will be submitted in early 2025.

We will keep you updated on progress as we move towards a planning decision later in 2025. Please sign up for our mailing list to receive further updates.

Thank you for your interest in the Sevington IBF project. We welcome your thoughts and encourage you to get involved and provide your feedback.

# Appendix XIII – Stage Two: Physical Feedback Form



We would be grateful if you could take a few moments to provide your views on Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF). This follows our first round of engagement where we asked for your views on various topic areas related to Sevington IBF. To find out more information about the project check our website: [www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk](http://www.engageSevingtonIBF.co.uk)

Please fill out this form and leave it with a project team member here today. All information you give us will be stored safely, treated confidentially, and only used in connection with this project.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation, we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect from you. The information we would like to collect is optional and will not be used in a way that identifies you. The information you provide will be used for statistical and research purposes only and will be used in accordance with our privacy policy.

You can also read our full privacy policy here: [www.kandaconsulting.co.uk/privacy-policy/](http://www.kandaconsulting.co.uk/privacy-policy/)



## Contact details

Name

Address

Postcode  Telephone

Email

Would you like to be added to our email mailing list to receive project updates?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you are posting your feedback form, please send to the following address:

✉ Kanda Consulting, 10 Chiswell Street, London, EC1Y 4UQ

### 1 How did you hear about the project?

- ☐ Newsletter in the post
- ☐ Search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Informed by a friend or a colleague
- ☐ Other:

### 2 Did you attend any of the previous events in October?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

### 3 Do you have any comments to make about the information presented in the engagement boards? Please mark your response with the relevant heading/s:

- ☐ Lighting
- ☐ Transport, access and movement
- ☐ Ecology and landscape
- ☐ Noise
- ☐ Air quality, climate change and wind
- ☐ Flooding and waste

3

### 4 Do you have any other general comments to make about the project?

4

## Appendix XIV – Stage Two: Digital Feedback Form



### Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF) Feedback Form

We would be grateful if you could take a few moments to provide your views on Sevington IBF.

All information you give us will be stored safely, treated confidentially, and only used in connection with this project. However, contact details are not required, should you wish not to provide them.

1→ What is your postcode?

Type your answer here...

OK

2 → How did you hear about the project?

Choose as many as you like

- ☐ A Newsletter in the post
- ☐ B Search engine (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
- ☐ C Social media
- ☐ D Recommended by a friend or a colleague
- ☐ E Other

**OK** press Enter ↵

3 → Did you attend any of the previous events in October?

- ☐ Y Yes
- ☐ N No

**OK**

4 → Do you have any comments to make about the information presented in the engagement boards? If so, please select the relevant headings below that you wish to comment on:

Choose as many as you like

- ☐ A Lighting
- ☐ B Transport, access and movement
- ☐ C Ecology and landscape
- ☐ D Noise
- ☐ E Air quality, climate change and wind
- ☐ F Flooding and waste

5 → Please provide your response below.

Type your answer here...

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OK

6 → Do you have any other general comments to make about the project?

Type your answer here...

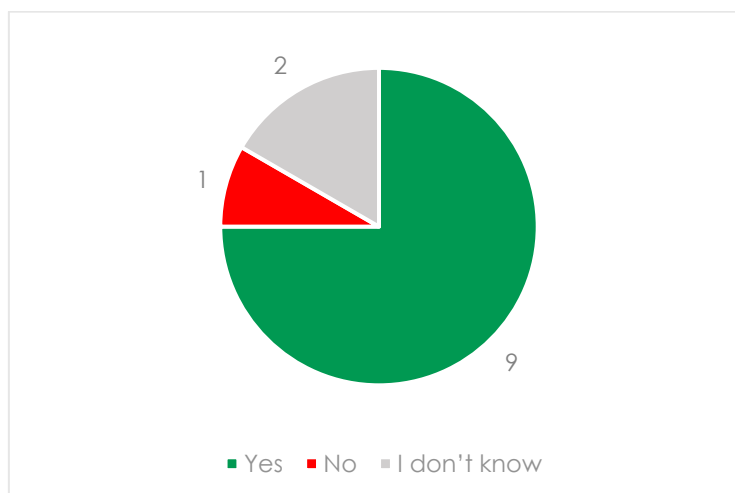
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OK

# Appendix XV – Responses to feedback survey

## Stage One Engagement Survey

### 1. Do you believe that Sevington IBF should have full planning permission to address the need for national biosecurity requirements?



### 2. Please give a reason for your answer.

- It was suggested that it was better for the IBF to be on the site rather than an Amazon warehouse, factory, or housing development.
- One respondent stated the importance of allowing local people to have input into the design criteria.
- One respondent said they believed that the site fulfilled national requirements and was appropriately located. They acknowledged the site's essential role in managing border traffic, noting that it caused minimal inconvenience to most neighbouring residents.
- It was suggested that full planning permission would provide much-needed certainty regarding the future of the site.
- It was stated that obtaining full planning permission for the site should provide the opportunity to safeguard the future of Sevington East as a Green Buffer Zone, protecting Marsham and ensuring a secure biodiversity net gain (BNG).
- One respondent suggested that planning permission should be conditional on preserving the site's biodiversity and minimising disruption and inconvenience to local residents.

### 3. What is your experience of socio-economic benefits, relating to Sevington IBF today?

- Several respondents noted that they were aware of the socio-economic benefits of the IBF, particularly the level of increased local employment.
- One respondent suggested that they had limited awareness of recognisable socio-economic benefits to date.
- One respondent highlighted concerns about the poor lighting, specifically the height and lack of shielding, and its impact on the local environment.\*

\*Please note: the answer was unrelated to the specific query posed but has been included as this was one of the answers provided.



**4. Is there a specific aspect relating to the socio-economic benefits that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- More local employment, apprenticeships, and grants to local organisations.
- Consideration of security measures for border control, other than paperwork at final destinations\*.
- Reduction of the volume of food and other products being brought into the UK\*.  
Traffic congestion around M20 Junction 10a and A20, both to and from Ashford.
- Difficulties crossing the road safely at the end of the bridle path - A20\*.
- Lack of need for Operation Brock except in the case of strikes at the docks in France\*

*\*Please note: the answer was unrelated to the specific query posed but has been included as this was one of the answers provided.*

**5. What is your experience of transport and access, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

- Respondents thought that poor motorway signage had caused HGVs to get lost. In particular, they felt that HGVs continued to mistakenly access residential roads. It was suggested that improved and permanent signage was urgently needed to prevent safety risks in this area.
- Junction 10a, was considered to have improved, traffic flow wise, but was still thought of as hazardous, with lorries often pulling out in the wrong lane and disregarding other motorists.
- Traffic lights frequently stopped 3–4 lorries at a time, causing blockages across the junction. Regular traffic build-ups were reported along the A20 (from Tesco to Junction 10a and Mersham to Junction 10a) during peak times.
- Some respondents noted that transport was acceptable, with no public access allowed due to the site's security measures.
- Left-hand-drive lorries were highlighted as posing significant accident risks.

**6. Is there a specific aspect relating to transport and access that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- Turning off lights on loading lanes when not in use.
- Improved signage on the M20 coastbound to guide HGVs to the correct exit.
- Addressing traffic light issues at both A20 junctions leading to Junction 10a, particularly lengthy waiting times and heavy traffic towards Folkestone or the M20.
- Installing additional traffic lights on the Junction 10a roundabout to accommodate any increase in IBF lorry traffic.
- Deterring lorries from parking in inappropriate locations.

**7. What is your experience of air quality, climate change and wind, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

- A few respondents noted that there was no discernible impact on air quality in relation to Sevington IBF.

- A suggestion was made to power the site using solar panels on roofs and other available space.
- Queuing traffic was identified as a contributor to air pollution.

**8. Is there a specific aspect relating to air quality, climate change and wind that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- Further discussions should be held with the Highways Agency to address all issues related to protecting air quality.
- More efforts should be made to reduce lighting wherever possible.\*

*\*Please note: the answer was unrelated to the specific query posed but has been included as this was one of the answers provided.*

**9. What is your experience with ground, flooding and waste, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

- Respondents noted issues with water not being drained by the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs), requiring water to be removed in other ways.
- It was suggested that there was significant rainwater run-off into Kingsford Street, which used to be collected into the ponds.
- One respondent noted the potential for large areas of concrete to have a detrimental effect on the surrounding areas that sit within the flood plain.

**10. Is there a specific aspect relating to ground, flooding and waste that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- Consider opportunities to enhance the existing pond at Sevington East and re-excavate ponds that were previously present on the site when assessing the BNG value.
- Publish the results of pollution monitoring and the maintenance of local rivers and 'run-off' ponds.
- Explore ways to protect local residents from the issues raised.

**11. What is your experience of light pollution, solar glare and access to light, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

- No issues with solar glare were reported.
- Respondents expressed concerns about lighting being too bright for extended periods, highlighting the need to address this in order to support the dark skies policy and minimise its impact on local residents.
- Light pollution was highlighted as a significant concern by residents in Mersham, with its impact extending beyond the village into the surrounding National Landscape.
- While some adjustments to lighting had been made, it was suggested that more improvements could be implemented.
- One resident responded to suggest that lights should be installed with sensors to ensure only areas in use were lit.
- Light spill was noted to impact rooms at the rear of properties facing the IBF.

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**12. Is there a specific aspect relating to light pollution, solar glare and access to light that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- Replacing 12m-high lights with lower, more focused lighting.
- Increasing planting in the eastern area to provide more protection for the village of Mersham.
- Adopting a more proactive approach to reducing night-time lighting in areas of the site not used by vehicles.
- Installing movement sensors on lights.
- Adding mature, evergreen trees to the bund adjacent to Highfield Lane.
- Replacing hedges in areas of Kingsford Street where they had been damaged or removed, to help shield residents from light pollution.

**13. What is your experience of noise and vibration, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

- Respondents noted that there was the occasional sound of vehicle engines at night, particularly during summer months, with audible noise from lorries reversing at times, particularly at night.
- Some respondents noted that there were limited issues, except occasionally there was noise pollution from very heavy traffic.
- It was suggested that there was disturbance from background noise and vibration originating from the IBF.
- A couple of respondents noted that noise from the IBF was generally acceptable and could be avoided by not walking too close to / past the site.

**14. Is there a specific aspect relating to noise and vibration that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- Consideration of how noise from vehicles reversing at night could be avoided.
- Prohibition of generators running at night and lorries being forced to switch engines off when parked.

**15. What is your experience of ecology and landscape, relating to Sevington IBF today?**

- Several respondents felt that there was limited landscaping in the eastern area, with little or no maintenance carried out. It was also noted that the eastern parcel was not maintained to the standard agreed upon in the original temporary permission, and action was seen as necessary to enforce this.
- It was stated that increased tree planting around the perimeter would be appreciated.
- The contrast between the expansive concrete and tarmac areas and the former fields was highlighted, with a desire for more efforts to be made to create an appropriate setting for Sevington Church, particularly when approaching Sevington from Mersham.
- One respondent noted that it was pleasing to see the amount of birdlife attracted by the lakes.

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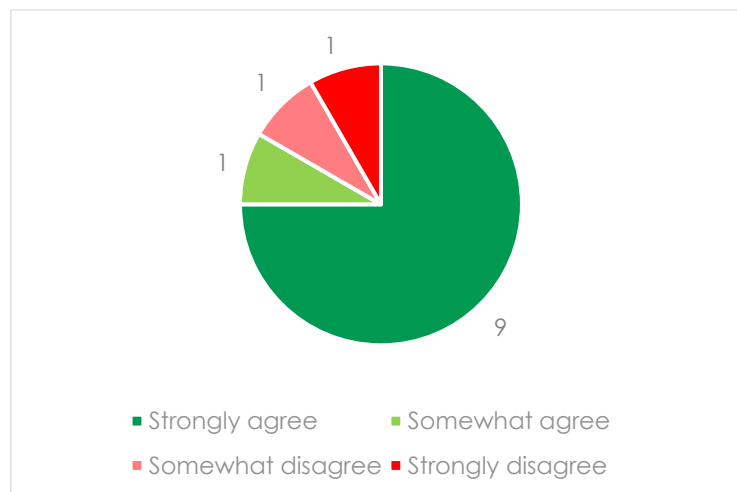
- It was highlighted that landscaping on the entrance verges needed improvement, including new tree planting, with dead saplings and hedging requiring replacement.
- Several respondents noted the importance of preserving and actively managing Sevington East for its biodiversity, serving as an ecological and landscape buffer between the site and the village.
- Concerns were raised about the spread of seeds from non-native species, such as ragwort, across nearby land.

**16. Is there a specific aspect relating to ecology and landscape that you feel the team should explore?**

Suggestions included:

- More managed planting in the eastern area to maximise the ecological and landscape value of the land.
- Previous landscaping commitments, including the creation of a wildflower area in the eastern section, should be delivered.
- Suggested use of the Sevington East parcel to increase biodiversity and create a woodland zone adjacent to Highfield Lane to obscure views of the IBF.
- Replacement of dead planting and enhancement of verges around the site.
- That Sevington East should be incorporated into the red line boundary to ensure biodiversity net gains are achieved on-site, rather than elsewhere.

**17. To what extent do you agree with Sevington East being a Biodiversity Net Gain site as part of Sevington IBF, which will contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain improvement when complete?**



**18. Please give a reason for your answer.**

- Respondents expressed concerns about the current management of Sevington East, with feedback indicating that it had yet to deliver the proposed Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), despite its significant potential to enhance the area.
- Respondents expressed support for using Sevington East to mitigate the site's carbon footprint while benefiting local wildlife.
- Several expressed the importance of maintaining Sevington East as a buffer between the development and Mersham Village.

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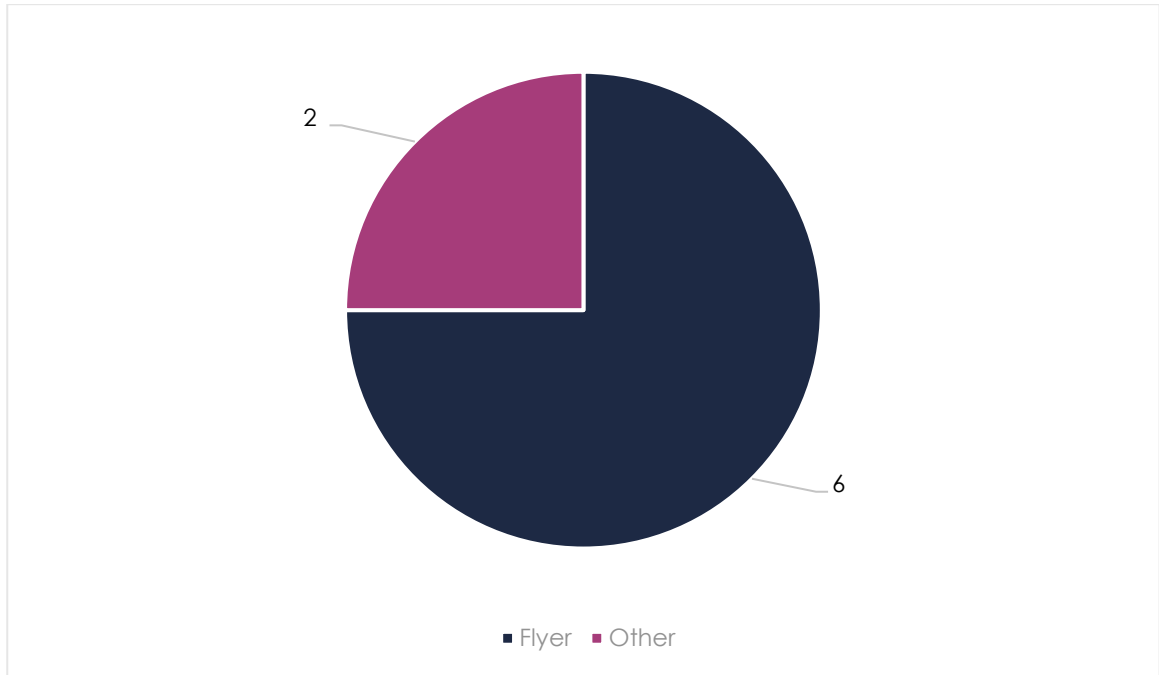
- Several voiced their concerns around further development extending towards Mersham, and BNG on Sevington East was seen as a means to protect the land from future development.
- One respondent referenced the designation of Sevington East under Policy SP7 of Ashford Borough Council's Local Plan (2030), advocating for it to remain a permanent Green Buffer Zone to preserve the historical character of Mersham Village and prevent the merging of developments.
- Several respondents noted that BNG was a way to offset potential environmental impacts from the construction and operation of the Sevington IBF.
- Several respondents agreed that implementing BNG on Sevington East would ensure long-term ecological benefits, contributing to biodiversity goals for at least 30 years.

#### **19. Do you have any other comments you would like to add about Sevington IBF?**

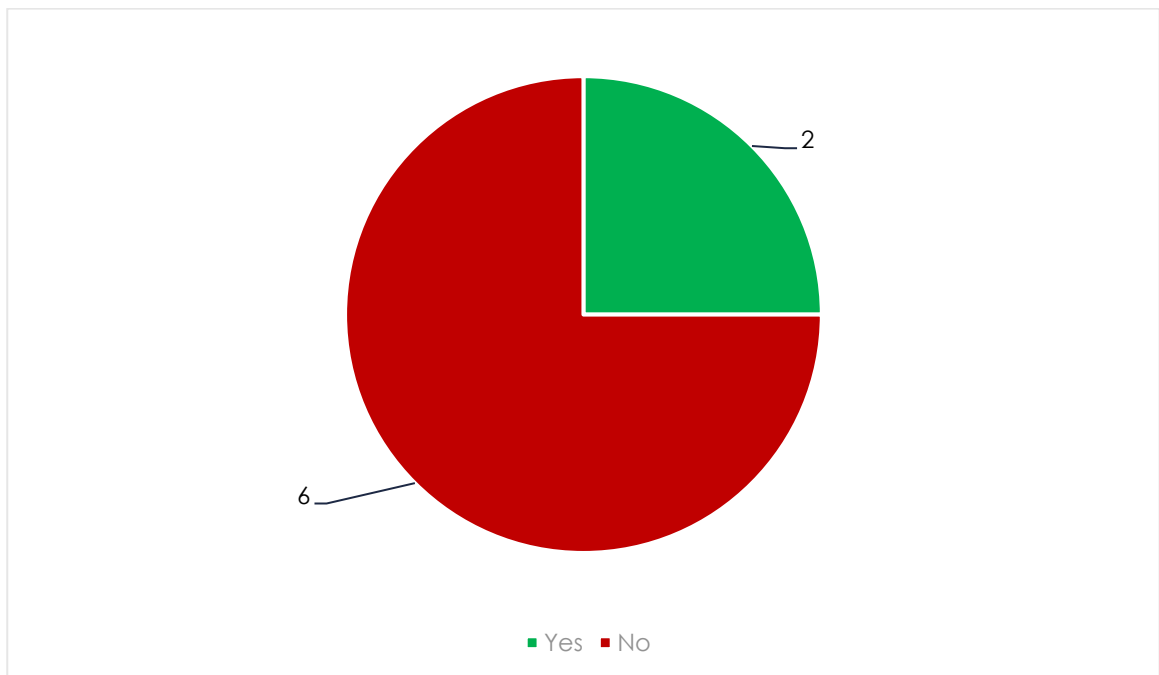
- While the operation of Sevington IBF was generally seen as running smoothly, respondents suggested several improvements, particularly in regard to traffic management around M20 Junction 10a, pedestrian access from the bridlepath crossing the A20, planting on the eastern section, and lighting.
- A representative from the Village Alliance expressed interest in Sevington East, highlighting the group's efforts to have the area permanently designated as a Green Buffer Zone with BNG. Key concerns included poor management, leading to the deterioration of the land due to thistles and ragwort, which had negatively impacted neighbouring agricultural land. The representative was encouraged by the possibility of proper management and enhancement of the area, with suggestions for achieving BNG, including tree planting, hedge replacement, pond improvements, and weed control.
- One respondent recommended that Sevington East be planted with a belt of trees tall enough to shield the village from the lighting at the IBF.
- Respondents suggested that the full planning application should adhere to the proposed conditions and mitigations, as it was felt that the mitigations outlined in the SDO had not been fully implemented.
- A couple of respondents highlighted the need for financial contributions to be addressed as part of the full planning permission.

### **Stage Two Engagement Survey**

#### **1. How did you hear about the project?**

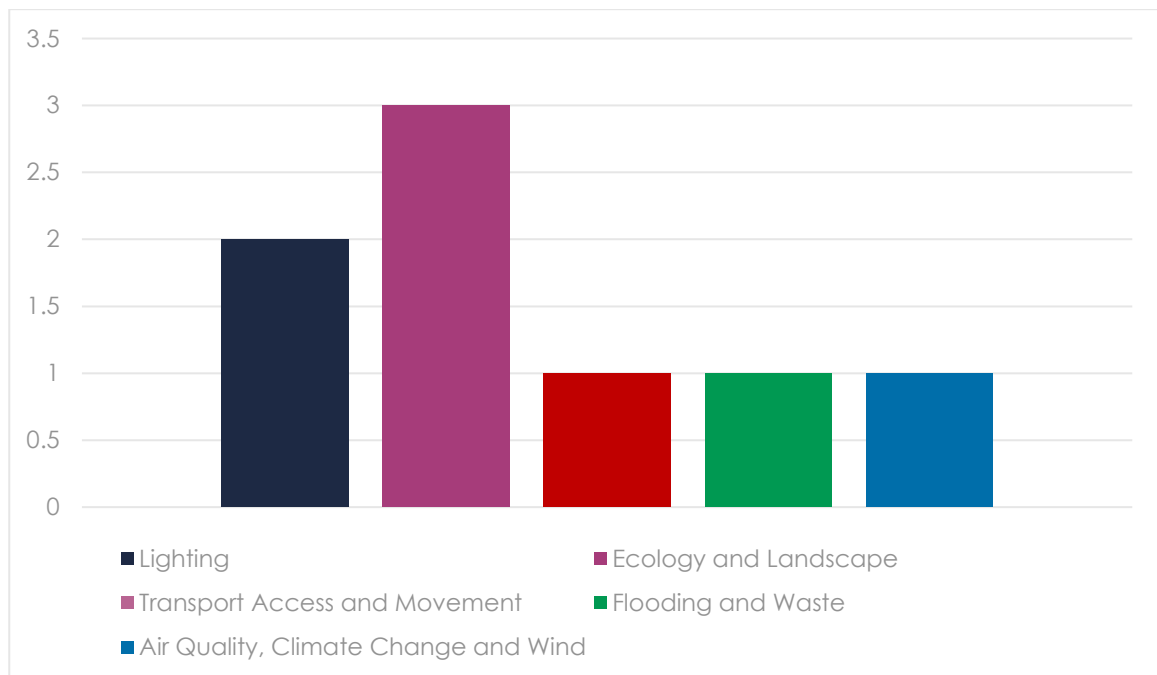


**2. Did you attend any of the previous events in October?**



**3. Do you have any comments to make about the information presented on the engagement boards? If so, please select the relevant headings below that you wish to comment on:**





#### 4. Please provide your response below.

##### Ecology and Landscape

- There was a desire to see the completion of the planned landscaping to the east of the site. One respondent noted that the current bare fields were unattractive, even with the presence of a bridle path.
- While the mention of a 30-year strategy for the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) land to the east of the facility was welcomed, one respondent requested a more detailed outline of this plan. Specific questions were raised regarding the ongoing management strategy and specific techniques that would be implemented to ensure that BNG goals were met.
- One respondent raised concerns about the impact of lorry and van parking along the road. This parking was reported to have caused damage to road signage and verges and, at times, had restricted pedestrian access due to vehicles parked on pavements.

##### Air Quality and Climate Change

- Respondents noted that they had seen no discernible impact on air quality since the site began operations but sought clarification on whether there was increased air pollution across Sevington and the wider area.

##### Lighting

- Respondents suggested that the proposed operational changes had the potential to reduce the light spill from the IBF site and improve conditions for residents of Kingsford Street, Sevington Village, and Church Road.
- One respondent expressed significant concern about light pollution visible from their home, describing the night sky as "permanently lit." They questioned the necessity of the current lighting levels, particularly given what they perceived to be

underutilisation of the lorry park. They also raised concerns about the "smartness" and environmental sustainability of the lighting system.

### **Transport, Access and Movement**

- Respondents raised concerns regarding the negative impact of Sevington IBF on transport around Junction 10a, with conditions described as having become "dangerous and more complex."
- Specific issues raised included concerns around poor driving by lorry drivers (wrong lanes, failing to yield/indicate) and traffic light configurations that lead to A20 blockages and dangerous driving during peak hours.
- One respondent insisted that this issue required further attention and should be addressed in the full planning application for Sevington IBF.

### **Flooding and Waste**

- Respondents noted the amount of litter along road verges. Respondents specifically noted the presence of unhygienic waste, including excrement and bottles containing urine.

### **5. Do you have any other general comments to make about the project?**

- Several respondents noted that the management of the community consultation had been commendable but that they felt there were outstanding concerns that needed to be addressed.
- It was noted that the preservation of sightlines to key Church spires and towers - St Mary's Willesborough, St Mary's Sevington, St John the Baptist, Merham, and Aldington Church - was welcomed.
- One respondent suggested that the operators of Sevington IBF should collaborate with other Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) projects locally and that a joint venture between these areas could be both cost-effective and beneficial for wildlife, flood management, and carbon storage.
- Respondents raised concern about the impact of light pollution from the IBF, particularly the cumulative effect of lighting from the IBF and two M20 junctions.
- One respondent sought clarification on types of lighting used on site- noting that whilst LED lighting was energy-efficient, it was harmful to the night sky and wildlife, as the light reflected off hard surfaces and bounced upwards, even with downward-facing units.
- One respondent noted that the increased focus on the Sevington East buffer area was appreciated, and there was hope that S106 agreements and BNG commitments would result in better land management
- One respondent suggested establishing another facility in a different part of Kent to ease the pressure on the M20. They noted that traffic had increased significantly since 2001 and that the addition of more lorries would exacerbate the problem.

## Appendix XV – Email / Telephone Queries and Feedback

### Email 1

This individual resided on the edge of Wye and raised several concerns, including:

- The impact of light pollution on local wildlife.
- Questions about measures being taken to protect wildlife.
- The effect of light pollution on nearby neighbours to the site.

### Email 2

This individual informed the engagement team of their availability during the door-knocking dates, as they were keen to provide their feedback in person but were unable to attend the community engagement events.

### Email 3

This individual was unable to attend the engagement events and submitted their concerns via email, which included:

- Traffic congestion around Junction 10 on the M20 roundabout.
- Noise from lorries at all hours, preventing them from opening their windows.
- Congested traffic with lorries heading up the A2070 towards Junction 10.
- A suggestion to reroute lorries via the motorway west to London and then east to the coast in order to avoid residential areas.

### Email 4

This individual expressed no objection to the full planning application but submitted written feedback regarding biodiversity on Sevington East, which included:

- Acknowledgment that the parcel of land was designated as a Green Buffer Zone.
- Recommendations for native tree planting, wetland generation, habitat creation, and educational initiatives.
- A suggestion to establish a project group to assist with these efforts, involving Mersham Parish Council and Mersham Action Group.

### Email 5

The fifth individual submitted a query relating to accessing the online survey on the engagement website.

### Email 6

This individual attended the engagement event and also spoke to the engagement team via telephone (summarised below). The main areas of concern they shared included:

- Concerns about noise and light pollution.
- Safety issues caused by HGVs travelling down Church Road.

- Feeling that the community had originally received insufficient notice about the SDO.
- Concerns about a new footpath by their property, which led to strangers passing by.
- Claims that inadequate site signage had led to damage to carriageway sides and property boundaries, causing traffic disruption.
- Noise concerns related to staff shouting, sounding horns, and revving engines, compounded by the acoustic fence reflecting HS1 line noise back to neighbours.
- Suggestions to rename the site “Ashford IBF” to preserve the historic significance of Sevington village.
- Concerns about inadequate planting around SUDS ponds and the prevalence of weeds.
- Observations of black particles and green/blue discharge during heavy rain.
- Proposed measures to reduce light pollution and queries about its impact on wildlife.

#### **Email 7**

This individual was a neighbour to the resident who submitted Query 6, echoing the latter's comments and concerns after the events. The author of email 7 raised a lack of sufficient engagement with the local community prior to those discussions.

#### **Email 8**

This email was received from an engagement event attendee, who stressed the importance of maintaining Sevington East. Key points were:

- Invasive species including ragwort and thistles
- Proposed landscaping plan for Sevington East
- Proposal put forward by Kent Wildlife Trust
- Loss of hedge along Blind Lane and Kingsford Street
- Pond enhancement, especially along Kingsford Street
- Run off water into the road on Kingsford Street

#### **Email 9**

Another individual who attended the engagement events submitted a written representation, which comprised:

- Whether the lighting on site complied with all the relevant regulations/British Standards
- Potentially developing KPIs to review traffic flow and number of lights switched on, to inform plans to minimise lighting on site
- Whether solar panels were planned to be installed at the site
- Whether more barn owl boxes were being proposed as part of the landscaping plan
- Accidents at junction 10a and whether this was exacerbated due to the design of the roundabout

#### **Email 10**

This email was sent from a local resident who attended the engagement event. They provided feedback around:

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- Effectiveness of acoustic barriers on low frequency noise
- Exploring alternative measures along the south western boundary of the site
- Parking locations of refrigerated trailers within the site
- Impact of noise to everyday life at home